

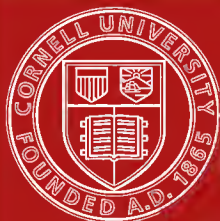


CORNELL  
UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



3 1924 065 010 955



Cornell University  
Library

The original of this book is in  
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in  
the United States on the use of the text.

<http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924065010955>



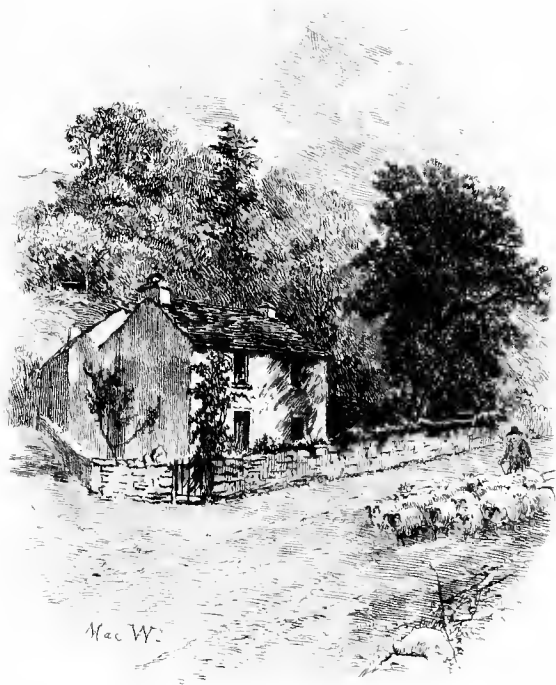




THE POETICAL WORKS OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.







DOVE COTTAGE, GRASMERE.







THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

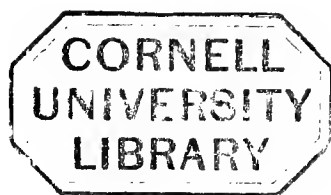
EDITED BY  
WILLIAM KNIGHT, LL.D.,  
PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY, ST ANDREWS.



VOLUME FOURTH  
  
EDINBURGH:  
WILLIAM PATERSON

MDCCCLXXXIII.

A. 23064



# CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR. . . . .	2
THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE. . . . .	6
A COMPLAINT. . . . .	11
STRAY PLEASURES. . . . .	12
POWER OF MUSIC. . . . .	14
STAR-GAZERS. . . . .	16
YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO. . . . .	18
PREFATORY SONNET. . . . .	20
PERSONAL TALK. . . . .	23
ADMONITION. . . . .	27
"BELOVED VALE!" I SAID "WHEN I SHALL CON HOW SWEET IT IS, WHEN MOTHER FANCY ROCKS. . . . .	28
THOSE WORDS WERE UTTERED AS IN PENSIVE MOOD. . . . .	29
COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF GRASMERE LAKE. . . . .	30
WITH HOW SAD STEPS, O MOON, THOU CLIMB'ST THE SKY. . . . .	31
THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US. . . . .	32
WITH SHIPS THE SEA WAS SPRINKLED FAR AND NIGH. . . . .	33
WHERE LIES THE LAND TO WHICH YON SHIP MUST GO ? . . . . .	34
TO SLEEP. . . . .	34
TO SLEEP. . . . .	35
TO SLEEP. . . . .	36
MICHAEL ANGELO IN REPLY TO THE PASSAGE UPON HIS STATUE OF NIGHT SLEEPING. . . . .	36
FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO. . . . .	37
FROM THE SAME. . . . .	38
FROM THE SAME. TO THE SUPREME BEING. . . . .	39
TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT. . . . .	40

	PAGE
METHOUGHT I SAW THE FOOTSTEPS OF A THRONE. . . . .	41
LINES. . . . .	42
NOVEMBER, 1806. . . . .	44
ADDRESS TO A CHILD. . . . .	45
ODE. INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD. . . . .	47
A PROPHECY. FEBRUARY, 1807. . . . .	63
THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND. . . . .	64
TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE. . . . .	65
THE MOTHER'S RETURN. . . . .	66
GIPSIES. . . . .	68
O NIGHTINGALE ! THOU SURELY ART. . . . .	70
TO LADY BEAUMONT. . . . .	71
THOUGH NARROW BE THAT OLD MAN'S CARES, AND NEAR. . . . .	73
IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE SEAT OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., LEICESTERSHIRE. . . . .	76
IN A GARDEN OF THE SAME. . . . .	78
WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., AND IN HIS NAME, FOR AN URN, PLACED BY HIM AT THE TERMINATION OF A NEWLY PLANTED AVENUE IN THE SAME GROUNDS. . . . .	80
FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON. . . . .	82
SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE, UPON THE RESTORA- TION OF LORD CLIFFORD. . . . .	83
THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE; OR, THE FATE OF THE NORTONS. . . . .	98
THE FORCE OF PRAYER; OR, THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY. A TRADITION. . . . .	201
COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS ENGAGED IN WRITING A TRACT, OCCASIONED BY THE CONVENTION OF CINTRA. . . . .	207
COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME AND ON THE SAME OCCASION. . . . .	208
GEORGE AND SARAH GREEN. . . . .	209

	PAGE
TYROLESE SONNETS—	
HOFFER. . . . .	212
ADVANCE—COME FORTH FROM THY TYROLEAN GROUND. .	213
FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE. . . . .	214
ALAS ! WHAT BOOTS THE LONG LABORIOUS QUEST. . .	214
ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE TYROLESE. . . .	215
THE MARTIAL COURAGE OF A DAY IS VAIN. . . . .	216
AND IS IT AMONG RUDE UNTUTORED DALES. . . . .	220
O’ER THE WIDE EARTH, ON MOUNTAIN AND ON PLAIN. . .	221
HAIL, ZARAGOZA ! IF WITH UNWET EYE. . . . .	222
SAY, WHAT IS HONOUR ?—’TIS THE FINEST SENSE. . .	223
BRAVE SCHILL ! BY DEATH DELIVERED, TAKE THY FLIGHT. .	223
CALL NOT THE ROYAL SWEDE UNFORTUNATE. . . . .	224
LOOK NOW ON THAT ADVENTURER WHO HATH PAID. . . .	225
IS THERE A POWER THAT CAN SUSTAIN AND CHEER. . .	225
AH ! WHERE IS PALAFOX ? NOR TONGUE NOR PEN. . . .	226
IN DUE OBSERVANCE OF AN ANCIENT RITE. . . . .	227
FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN AT ONE OF THOSE FUNERALS .	228
ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY. . . . .	228
UPON THE SAME EVENT. . . . .	229
THE OAK OF GUERNICA. . . . .	230
INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD. . . . .	231
AVAUNT ALL SPECIOUS PLIANCY OF MIND. . . . .	232
O’ERWEENING STATESMEN HAVE FULL LONG RELIED. . . .	232
THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERRILLAS. . . . .	233
EPITAPHS TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA—	
WEEP NOT, BELOVED FRIENDS ! NOR LET THE AIR. . .	234
PERHAPS SOME NEEDFUL SERVICE OF THE STATE. . . .	234
O THOU WHO MOVEST ONWARD WITH A MIND. . . . .	235
THERE NEVER BREATHED A MAN WHO, WHEN HIS LIFE. .	236
TRUE IS IT THAT AMBROSIO SALINERO. . . . .	237
DESTINED TO WAR FROM VERY INFANCY. . . . .	238

	PAGE
EPITAPHS TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA— <i>continued</i> .	
O FLOWER OF ALL THAT SPRINGS FROM GENTLE BLOOD. . . . .	239
NOT WITHOUT HEAVY GRIEF OF HEART DID HE. . . . .	239
PAUSE, COURTEOUS SPIRIT !—BALBI SUPPLICATES. . . . .	240
MATERNAL GRIEF. . . . .	242
CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD. . . . .	245
SPANISH GUERRILLAS. . . . .	246
THE POWER OF ARMIES IS A VISIBLE THING. . . . .	247
HERE PAUSE : THE POET CLAIMS AT LEAST THIS PRAISE. . . . .	248
EPISTLE TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART. . . . .	248
UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPISTLE THIRTY YEARS AFTER ITS COMPOSITION. . . . .	260
UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE, PAINTED BY SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART. . . . .	263
SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL. . . . .	265
COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND IN THE VALE OF GRASMERE, 1812. . . . .	266
WATER-FOWL. . . . .	267
VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB. . . . .	268
WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL ON A STONE ON THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB. . . . .	269
NOVEMBER, 1813. . . . .	271

---

## APPENDIX.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION OF THE LYRICAL BALLADS (1800). . . . .	275
ON POETIC DICTION. . . . .	305
DEDICATION TO THE EDITION OF 1815. . . . .	310
PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815. . . . .	311
ESSAY SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE. . . . .	330
POSTSCRIPT, 1835. . . . .	361

# WORDSWORTH'S POETICAL WORKS.

1806.

From evidence gathered since the Chronological Table in the first volume of this edition was issued, I have been led to assign many of the Sonnets first published in 1807 to the year 1806. Wordsworth left Grasmere with his household for Coleorton in November 1806, and we have no proof that he returned to Westmoreland till April 1808 ; although his sister spent part of the winter of 1807-8 at Dove Cottage, while he and Mrs Wordsworth wintered at Stockton with the Hutchinsons. Several of the sonnets which are published in the volumes of 1807 refer, however, to Grasmere, and were evidently composed there ; and I have conjecturally assigned a good many of them—about twenty in all—to the year 1806, including even the one “composed by the side of Grasmere Lake,” beginning—

Clouds, lingering yet, extend in solid bars,

to which he himself gave the date 1807. (See the note, p. 31.) Some of these sonnets may have been composed earlier than 1806, but it is not likely that any of them belong to a later year.

In addition to these sonnets, the poems of 1806 include the *Character of the Happy Warrior* (unless that should be assigned to the close of the previous year—see the note to the poem), *The Horn of Egremont Castle*, the three poems composed in London in the spring of the year (April or May)—viz., *Stray Pleasures*, *Star-gazers*, and *The Power of Music*—the lines on the Mountain Echo, those composed in expectation of the death of Mr Fox, and the *Ode on Immortality*. Sir Walter Scott, in writing to Southey on the 4th of February 1806, said, “Wordsworth has of late been more employed in correcting his poems than in writing others.”

Since this edition was begun, so many new facts and dates have been discovered—from sources as yet only partially accessible—that a second and revised Chronological Table of the Poems will be given in the last volume, along with the Life of the Poet.—Ed.

## CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honour of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note, I will add that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck, as mentioned elsewhere. His messmates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval, instead of the East India Company's, service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland; the next to them, from the North of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where, thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are commonly called, free, schools abound.]

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he  
That every man in arms should wish to be?<sup>1</sup>  
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought  
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1820.

Whom every man . . . . . 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1845.

Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought. 1807.



Whose high endeavours are an inward light  
 That makes the path before him always bright:<sup>1</sup>  
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern  
 What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;  
 Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,  
 But makes his moral being his prime care;  
 Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,  
 And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!  
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain;  
 In face of these doth exercise a power  
 Which is our human nature's highest dower;  
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves  
 Of their bad influence, and their good receives:  
 By objects, which might force the soul to abate  
 Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;  
 Is placable—because occasions rise  
 So often that demand such sacrifice;  
 More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,  
 As tempted more; more able to endure  
 As more exposed to suffering and distress;  
 Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.  
 —'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends  
 Upon that law as on the best of friends;  
 Whence, in a state where men are tempted still  
 To evil for a guard against worse ill,  
 And what in quality or act is best  
 Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,  
 He labours good on good to fix, and owes<sup>2</sup>  
 To virtue every triumph that he knows:

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

That make the path . . . . 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

He fixes good on good alone, and owes 1807.

—Who, if he rise to station of command,  
Rises by open means ; and there will stand  
On honourable terms, or else retire,  
And in himself possess his own desire ;  
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same  
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;  
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait  
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state ;  
Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,  
Like showers of manna, if they come at all :  
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,  
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,  
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;  
But who, if he be called upon to face  
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined  
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,  
Is happy as a Lover ; and attired  
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired ;  
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law  
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;  
Or if an unexpected call succeed,  
Come when it will, is equal to the need :  
—He who, though thus endued as with a sense  
And faculty for storm and turbulence,  
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans  
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes ;  
Sweet images ! which, whereso'er he be,  
Are at his heart ; and such fidelity  
It is his darling passion to approve ;  
More brave for this, that he hath much to love :—  
'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,  
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,  
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—

Who, with a toward or untoward lot,  
 Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—  
 Plays, in the many games of life, that one  
 Where what he most doth value must be won :  
 Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,  
 Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;  
 Who, not content that former worth stand fast,  
Looks forward, persevering to the last,  
From well to better, daily self-surpast :  
 Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth  
 For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,  
 Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,<sup>1</sup>  
 And leave a dead unprofitable name—  
 Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;  
 And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws  
 His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :  
This is the happy Warrior ; this is He  
That every Man in arms should wish to be.<sup>2</sup>

The following note was added, in the edition of 1807. "The above verses were written soon after tidings had been received of the Death of Lord Nelson, which event diverted the Author's thoughts to the subject. His respect for the memory of his great fellow-countryman induces him to mention this ; though he is well aware that the Verses must suffer from any connection in the Reader's mind, with a name so illustrious."

This note would seem to warrant our removing the date of the composition of the poem, from 1806 to 1805 ; since Lord Nelson died at the battle of Trafalgar, on the 21st of October 1805. On the other hand, Wordsworth himself gave the date, 1806 ; and the "soon after" of the above note may perhaps be stretched to include two months and a half. In writing to Sir George Beaumont on the 11th of February 1806, and enclosing a copy of these verses, he says, "they were written several weeks

<sup>1</sup> C. and 1843.

Or he must go to dust without his fame,	1807.
Or he must fall, and sleep without his fame,	1836.

<sup>2</sup> 1845.

Whom every Man . . . .	1807.
------------------------	-------

ago." Southey, writing to Sir Walter Scott, from Keswick, on the 4th of February 1806, says, "Wordsworth was with me last week ; he has of late been more employed in correcting his poems than in writing others ; but one piece he has written, upon the ideal character of a soldier, than which I have never seen anything more full of meaning and sound thought. The subject was suggested by Nelson's most glorious death, though having no reference to it. He had some thoughts of sending it to the Courier, in which case you will easily recognise it." (*The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, Vol. III. p. 19.) As it is impossible to decide with accuracy, in the absence of more definite data, I have followed the poet's own statement, and assigned the poem to the year 1806. It was classed by Wordsworth amongst his "Poems of Sentiment and Reflection."

In the edition of 1807, the following note was added to the lines—

. . . . . persevering to the last  
From well to better, daily self-surpassed.  
"For knight's ever should be persevering,  
To seek honour without feintisse or slouth,  
Fro wele to better in all manner thing."  
Chaucer—*The Floure and the Leafe*.—ED.

## THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[A Tradition transferred from the ancient mansion of Hutton John, the seat of the Hudlestons, to Egremont Castle.]

ERE the Brothers through the gateway  
Issued forth with old and young,  
To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed  
Which for ages there had hung.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. and 1485.

When the Brothers reached the gateway,  
Eustace pointed with his lance  
To the Horn which there was hanging ;  
Horn of the inheritance.

1807.

When the Brothers reached the gateway,  
With their followers old and young,  
To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed  
That for ages there had hung.

C.

Horn it was which none could sound,  
 No one upon living ground,  
 Save He who came as rightful Heir  
 To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from times of earliest record<sup>1</sup>  
 Had the House of Lucie born,  
 Who of right had held the Lordship  
 Claimed by proof upon the Horn :<sup>2</sup>  
 Each at the appointed hour  
 Tried the Horn,—it owned his power ;  
 He was acknowledged : and the blast,  
 Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,  
 And to Hubert thus said he,  
 " What I speak this Horn shall witness  
 For thy better memory.  
 Hear, then, and neglect me not !  
 At this time, and on this spot,  
 The words are uttered from my heart,  
 As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

On good service we are going  
 Life to risk by sea and land,  
 In which course if Christ our Saviour  
 Do my sinful soul demand,  
 Hither come thou back straightway,  
 Hubert, if alive that day ;

<sup>1</sup> C. and 1845.

Heirs from ages without record

1807.

<sup>2</sup> C. and 1845.

Who of right had claimed the Lordship  
 By the proof upon the Horn :

1807.

Return, and sound the Horn, that we  
May have a living House still left in thee !”

“Fear not,” quickly answered Hubert ;  
“As I am thy Father’s son,  
What thou askest, noble Brother,  
With God’s favour shall be done.”  
So were both right well content :  
Forth they from the Castle went,<sup>1</sup>  
And at the head of their Array  
To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies  
Were a line for valour famed)  
And where’er their strokes alighted,  
There the Saracens were tamed.  
Whence, then, could it come—the thought—  
By what evil spirit brought ?  
Oh ! can a brave Man wish to take  
His Brother’s life, for Lands’ and Castle’s sake ?

“Sir !” the Ruffians said to Hubert,  
“Deep he lies in Jordan flood.”  
Stricken by this ill-assurance,  
Pale and trembling Hubert stood.  
“Take your earnings.”—Oh ! that I  
Could have *seen* my Brother die !  
It was a pang that vexed him then ;  
And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace !  
Nor of him were tidings heard ;

<sup>1</sup> C. and 1845.

From the Castle forth they went,

Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer  
 Back again to England steered.  
 To his Castle Hubert sped ;  
 Nothing has he now to dread.<sup>1</sup>  
 But silent and by stealth he came,  
 And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time,  
 Night or day, at even or morn ;  
 No one's eye had seen him enter,  
 No one's ear had heard the Horn.<sup>2</sup>  
 But bold Hubert lives in glee :  
 Months and years went smilingly ;  
 With plenty was his table spread ;  
 And bright the Lady is who shares his bed.

Likewise he had sons and daughters ;  
 And, as good men do, he sate  
 At his board by these surrounded,  
 Flourishing in fair estate.  
 And while thus in open day  
 Once he sate, as old books say,  
 A blast was uttered from the Horn,  
 Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.

'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace !  
 He is come to claim his right :  
 Ancient castle, woods, and mountains  
 Hear the challenge with delight.

<sup>1</sup> 1845.

He has nothing now to dread.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> c. and 1845.

For the sound was heard by no one  
 Of the proclamation-horn

1807.

Hubert ! though the blast be blown  
He is helpless and alone :  
Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word !  
And there he may be lodged, and thou be Lord.

Speak !—astounded Hubert cannot ;  
And, if power to speak he had,  
All are daunted, all the household  
Smitten to the heart, and sad.  
'Tis Sir Eustace ; if it be  
Living man, it must be he !  
Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,  
And by a postern-gate he slunk away.

Long and long was he unheard of :  
To his Brother then he came,  
Made confession, asked forgiveness,  
Asked it by a brother's name,  
And by all the saints in heaven ;  
And of Eustace was forgiven :  
Then in a convent went to hide  
His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good angels  
Had preserved from murderers' hands,  
And from Pagan chains had rescued,  
Lived with honour on his lands.  
Sons he had, saw sons of theirs :  
And through ages, heirs of heirs,  
A long posterity renowned,  
Sounded the Horn which they alone could sound.

The following note is appended to the editions, from 1807 to 1845 :—  
“ This story is a Cumberland tradition ; I have heard it also related of  
the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Huddlestons, in



a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor." Egremont Castle, to which this Cumberland tradition was transferred, is close to the town of Egremont, an ancient borough on the river Ehen, not far from St Bees. The castle was founded about the beginning of the twelfth century, by William, brother of Ranulph de Meschines, who bestowed on him the whole of the extensive barony of Copeland. The gateway of the castle is vaulted with semicircular arches, and defended by a strong tower. Westward from the castle area is an ascent to three narrow gates, standing in a line, and close together. These communicated with the outworks, each being defended by a portcullis. Beyond the gates is an artificial mount, seventy-eight feet above the moat; and on this stood an ancient circular tower. (See a description of the castle in Britton and Brayley's *Cumberland*.) The river Dacor, or Dacre, referred to in Wordsworth's note, joins the Eamont, a short way below Ullswater; and the hall of Hutton John, which in the reign of Edward III. belonged to the barony of Graystock, passed in the time of Elizabeth to the Huddlestons. The famous Catholic father, John Huddleston, chaplain to Charles II. and James II., was of this family.

In the edition of 1815, the footnote runs, "This poem, and the Ballad which follows it" (it is the ballad of Goody Blake), "as they rather refer to the imagination than are produced by it would not have been placed here" (*i.e.*, amongst the *Poems of the Imagination*), "but to avoid a needless multiplication of the classes." Accordingly, in all the editions, from 1815 to 1843, *The Horn of Egremont Castle* remained amongst the "Poems of the Imagination;" in 1845, it was placed along with its companion "Ballad"—in the class of "Miscellaneous Poems."

The text of the poem underwent no change in the editions from 1807 to 1845. But—as is shown by the notes in Lord Coleridge's copy of the edition of 1836—the alterations, subsequently adopted in 1845, were made in the interval between these years.—ED.

## A COMPLAINT.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Suggested by a change in the manner of a friend.]

THERE is a change—and I am poor;  
 Your love hath been, not long ago,  
 A fountain at my fond heart's door,  
 Whose only business was to flow;  
 And flow it did; not taking heed  
 Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count !  
 Blest was I then all bliss above !  
 Now, for that consecrated fount<sup>1</sup>  
 Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,  
 What have I ? shall I dare to tell ?  
 A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—  
 I trust it is,—and never dry :  
 What matter ? if the waters sleep  
 In silence and obscurity.  
 —Such change, and at the very door  
 Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

Classed by Wordsworth amongst the “Poems founded on the Affections.”—ED.

### STRAY PLEASURES.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[Suggested on the Thames by the sight of one of these floating mills that used to be seen there. This I noticed on the Surrey side between Somerset House and Blackfriars' Bridge. Charles Lamb was with me at the time ; and I thought it remarkable that I should have to point out to *him*, an idolatrous Londoner, a sight so interesting as the happy group dancing on the platform. Mills of this kind used to be, and perhaps still are, not uncommon on the continent. I noticed several upon the river Saone in the year 1799, particularly near the town of Chalons, where my friend Jones and I halted a day when we crossed France ; so far on foot ; there we embarked, and floated down to Lyons.]

“ — *Pleasure is spread through the earth  
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find.*”

By their floating mill,  
 That lies dead and still,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Now, for this consecrated Fount.

1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

Which lies dead and still,

1807.

Behold yon Prisoners three,  
 The Miller with two Dames, on the breast of the Thames !  
 The platform is small, but gives room for them all ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes  
 To their mill where it floats,  
 To their house and their mill tethered fast :  
 To the small wooden isle where, their work to beguile,  
 They from morning to even take whatever is given ;—  
 And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,  
 All alive with the fires  
 Of the sun going down to his rest,  
 In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,  
 They dance,—there are three, as jocund as free,  
 While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,  
 They themselves make the reel,  
 And their music's a prey which they seize ;  
 It plays not for them,—what matter ? 'tis theirs ;  
 And if they had care, it has scattered their cares ;  
 While they dance, crying, “ Long as ye please ! ”

They dance not for me,  
 Yet mine is their glee !  
 Thus pleasure is spread through the earth  
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find ;  
 Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,  
 Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

<sup>1</sup> 1820.

. . . but there's room for them all ;

1807.

The showers of the spring  
 Rouse the birds, and they sing ;  
 If the wind do but stir for his proper delight,  
 Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss ;  
 Each wave, one and t'other, speeds after his brother ;  
 They are happy, for that is their right !

Wordsworth went up to London in April 1806, where he stayed two months. It was, doubtless, on that occasion that these lines were written. The title *Stray Pleasures* was first given to them in the edition of 1820. The verses were classed amongst the "Poems of the Fancy." The year mentioned in the Fenwick note is incorrect. It was in 1790 that Wordsworth crossed France with his friend Jones.—ED.

## POWER OF MUSIC.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[Taken from life.]

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus ! yes, Faith may grow bold,  
 And take to herself all the wonders of old ;—  
 Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with the same  
 In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its name.

His station is there ; and he works on the crowd,  
 He sways them with harmony merry and loud ;  
 He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim—  
 Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and him ?

What an eager assembly ! what an empire is this !  
 The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss ;  
 The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest ;  
 And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer oppress.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the night,  
 So He, where he stands, is a centre of light ;

It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,<sup>1</sup>  
And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in haste—  
What matter! he's caught—and his time runs to waste;  
The Newsman is stopped, though he stops on the fret;  
And the half-breathless Lamplighter—he's in the net!

The Porter sits down on the weight which he bore;  
The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her store;—  
If a thief could be here he might pilfer at ease;  
She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she sees!

He stands, backed by the wall;—he abates not his din;  
His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in,  
From the old and the young, from the poorest: and there!  
The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand  
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a band;  
I am glad for him, blind as he is!—all the while  
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with a smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in height,  
Not an inch of his body is free from delight;  
Can he keep himself still, if he would? oh, not he!  
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch;<sup>2</sup> like a tower  
That long has leaned forward, leans hour after hour!—  
That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,  
While she dandles the Babe in her arms to the sound.

<sup>1</sup> 1815.

. . . . . dusky-faced . . . 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

There's a Cripple . . . . . 1807.

Now, coaches and chariots ! roar on like a stream :  
 Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream :  
 They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for you,  
 Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue !

This must be assigned to the same London visit, in the spring of 1806, referred to in the note to the previous poem. It was classed by Wordsworth amongst the "Poems of the Imagination."—Ed.

## STAR-GAZERS.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[Observed by me in Leicester-square, as here described.]

WHAT crowd is this? what have we here! we must not pass  
 it by ;

A Telescope upon its frame, and pointed to the sky :  
 Long is it as a barber's pole, or mast of little boat,  
 Some little pleasure-skiff, that doth on Thames's waters float.

The Showman chooses well his place, 'tis Leicester's busy  
 Square ;

And is as happy in his night, for the heavens are blue and  
 fair ;

Calm, though impatient, is<sup>1</sup> the crowd ; each stands ready  
 with the fee,

And envies him that's looking ;—what an insight must it be!<sup>2</sup>

Yet, Showman, where can lie the cause? Shall thy Imple-  
 ment have blame,

A boaster, that when he is tried, fails, and is put to shame ?

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

. . . . are the crowd . . . .  
 MS. letter, D. W. to Lady  
 Beaumont, Nov. 15, 1806.  
 . . . . each is ready . . . . 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1807.

Impatient till his moment comes . . . . 1832.  
 . . . . come . . . . 1837.  
 1842 returns to 1807.

Or is it good as others are, and be their eyes in fault ?  
 Their eyes, or minds ? or, finally, is yon resplendent vault ?<sup>1</sup>

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good as we have here ?  
 Or gives a thing but small delight that never can be dear ?  
 The silver moon with all her vales, and hills of mightiest  
 fame ;

Doth she betray us when they're seen ? or<sup>2</sup> are they but a  
 name ?

Or is it rather that Conceit rapacious is and strong,  
 And bounty never yields so much but it seems to do her  
 wrong ?

Or is it, that when human Souls a journey long have had  
 And are returned into themselves, they cannot but be sad ?

Or must we be constrained to think that these Spectators  
 rude,

Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the multitude,  
 Have souls which never yet have risen, and therefore prostrate  
 lie ?

No, no, this cannot be ;—men thirst for power and majesty !<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1832.

. . . or finally, is this resplendent vault ?

MS. letter, D. W. to Lady Beaumont,  
 Nov. 15, 1806, and 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

Do they betray us when they're seen ? and are they but a name ?

MS. letter, D. W. to Lady Beaumont,  
 Nov. 15, 1806, and 1807.

<sup>3</sup> 1807.

Or is it but unwelcome thought ! that these Spectators rude,  
 Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the multitude,  
 Have souls which never yet have risen, and therefore  
 prostrate lie,

Not to be lifted up at once to power and majesty ?

MS. letter, D. W. to Lady  
 Beaumont, Nov. 15, 1806.

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought the blissful mind  
employ<sup>1</sup>

Of him who gazes, or has gazed? a grave and steady joy,  
That doth reject all show of pride, admits no outward sign,  
Because not of this noisy world, but silent and divine!

Whatever be the cause,<sup>2</sup> 'tis sure that they who pry and  
pore

Seem to meet with little gain, seem less happy than before:  
One after One they take their turn,<sup>3</sup> nor have I one espied  
That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.

Doubtless "observed" during the visit to London in April and May 1806. Classed, like the former, amongst the "Poems of the Imagination."—Ed.

## THE ECHO.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The echo came from Nab-scar, when I was walking on the opposite side of Rydal Mere. I will here mention, for my dear Sister's sake, that, while she was sitting alone one day high up on this part of Loughrigg Fell, she was so affected by the voice of the Cuckoo heard from the crags at some distance that she could not suppress a wish to have a stone inscribed with her name among the rocks from which the sound proceeded. On my return from my walk I recited these verses to Mrs Wordsworth.]

<sup>1</sup> 1807.

Or does some deep and earnest joy . . . .

MS. letter, D. W. to Lady  
Beaumont, Nov. 15, 1806.

<sup>2</sup> 1807.

Whate'er the cause . . . .

MS. letter, D. W. to Lady  
Beaumont, Nov. 15, 1806.

<sup>3</sup> 1807.

. . . . their turns . . . .

MS. letter, D. W. to Lady  
Beaumont, Nov. 15, 1806.



YES, it was the mountain Echo,<sup>1</sup>  
 Solitary, clear, profound,  
 Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,<sup>2</sup>  
 Giving to her sound for sound !<sup>3</sup>

Unsolicited reply  
 To a babbling wanderer sent ;<sup>4</sup>  
 Like her ordinary cry,  
 Like—but oh, how different !

Hears not also mortal Life ?  
 Hear not we, unthinking Creatures !  
 Slaves of folly, love, or strife—<sup>5</sup>  
 Voices of two different natures ?

Have not *we* too ?—yes, we have  
 Answers, and we know not whence ;  
 Echoes from beyond the grave,  
 Recognised intelligence !

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Yes ! full surely 'twas the Echo,

1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

Answering to Thee, shouting Cuckoo !  
 Giving to thee Sound for Sound.

1807

<sup>3</sup> In ed. 1807, the following verse follows the first—

Whence the Voice ? from air or earth ?  
 This the Cuckoo cannot tell ;  
 But a startling sound had birth,  
 As the Bird must know full well ;

<sup>4</sup> 1815.

Like the voice through earth and sky  
 By the restless Cuckoo sent ;

1807.

<sup>5</sup> 1807.

. . . . and strife.

1827.

1832 returns to text of 1807.

Such rebounds our inward ear  
 Catches sometimes from afar—<sup>1</sup>  
 Listen, ponder, hold them dear ;<sup>2</sup>  
 For of God,—of God they are.

The place where this echo was heard can easily be identified by any one walking along the southern, or Loughrigg shore of Rydal. The Fenwick note refers to a wish of Dorothy Wordsworth to have her name inscribed on a stone amongst the rocks of Loughrigg Fell. It is impossible to know whether it was ever carried out or not. If it was, the place is undiscoverable, like the spot on the banks of the Rotha, where Joanna's name was graven "deep in the living rock," or the place where Wordsworth carved his wife's initials (as recorded in Mrs Heman's *Memoirs*), or where the Daisy was found, which suggested the lines—

"Small service is true service while it lasts ;"

and it is well that they are undiscoverable. It is so easy for posterity to vulgarise, by idle and unappreciative curiosity, spots that are sacred only to the few who feel them to be shrines. The very grave where Wordsworth rests runs the risk of being thus abused by the unthinking crowds. But, in the hope that no one will desecrate it as the Rock of Names has been injured, I may mention that there is a stone with the initial "W." deeply cut, near Rydal Mere, on the north-eastern slope of Loughrigg. The exact locality need not be more minutely indicated. In the edition of 1827, this poem was called *The Echo*. It was always classed amongst the "Poems of the Imagination."—Ed.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me the sonnets of Milton. I had long been well acquainted

<sup>1</sup> 1806.

Such within ourselves we hear	
Oft-times, ours though sent from far ;	1807.
Such rebounds our inward ear	
Often catches from afar ;	1827.
Often as thy inward ear	
Catches such rebounds, beware,—	1832.

<sup>2</sup> 1807.

Giddy mortals ! hold them dear ;	1827.
----------------------------------	-------

Ed. 1832 returns to text of 1807.

with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion with the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony that runs through most of them,—in character so totally different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakspeare's fine sonnets. I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and produced three sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever wrote, except an irregular one at school. Of these three, the only one I distinctly remember is—"I grieved for Buonapartè." One was never written down; the third, which was, I believe, preserved, I cannot particularise.]

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room ;  
 And hermits are contented with their cells ;  
 And students with their pensive citadels ;  
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,  
 Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for bloom,  
 High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,  
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells :  
 In truth the prison, unto which we doom  
 Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for me,<sup>1</sup>  
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound  
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground ;  
 Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)  
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,  
 Should find brief solace there,<sup>2</sup> as I have found.

This sonnet was named "Prefatory Sonnet," and, as such, was prefixed to the series of "Miscellaneous Sonnets" in the editions of 1807, 1815, and 1820. In 1827, it took its place as the first of the series.

In Wordsworth's time "Furness-fells" was a generic phrase for all the hills east of the Duddon, south of the Brathay, and west of Windermere ; including the Coniston group, Wetherlam, with the Yewdale and Tilberthwaite fells. The district of Furness, like that of Craven in Yorkshire, being originally ecclesiastical, had a wide area, of which the abbey of Furness was the centre.

With the lines

. . . the prison, unto which we doom  
 Ourselves, no prison is : . . .

<sup>1</sup> 1849. . . . to me, 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1827. Should find short solace . . . 1807.

compare those in Lovelace's poem, *To Althea from Prison*—

Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage ;  
Minds innocent and quiet take  
These for a hermitage.

With the phrase—

The weight of too much liberty,

compare the line in the *Ode to Duty*—

Me this unchartered freedom tires.

In the Fenwick note prefixed to this sonnet, Wordsworth refers to his earliest attempt at sonnet writing. He says he wrote an irregular one at school, and the next were three sonnets written one afternoon in Dove Cottage in the year 1801, after his sister had read the sonnets of Milton. This note is not, however, to be trusted. It was not in 1801, but on the 21st of May 1802, that his sister read to him these sonnets of Milton ; and he afterwards wrote not one but two sonnets on Buonaparte. What the irregular sonnet written at school was it is impossible to say, unless he refers to the one described in 1807, and subsequent editions, as "written in very early youth ;" that, viz., beginning—

Calm is all nature as a resting wheel.

But, as indicated in the note preceding the preface to the first volume of this edition, Wordsworth wrote on a copy of *The Evening Walk* (edition 1793) :—"This is the first of my published poems, with the exception of a sonnet, written when I was a schoolboy, and published in the 'European Magazine' in June or July 1786, and signed Axio-logus." Even as to this date his memory was at fault. It was published in 1787, when he was seventeen years of age. Its full title may be given ; although, for reasons already stated, it would be unjustifiable to republish the sonnet. It was entitled, "Sonnet, on seeing Miss Maria Williams weep at a Tale of Distress." But, fully ten years before the date mentioned by Dorothy Wordsworth in her Grasmere journal—as the day on which she read Milton's sonnets to her brother, and on which he wrote the two on Buonaparte—he had written others, the existence of which he had evidently forgotten. On the 6th of May 1792, his sister wrote thus from Fornett Rectory in Norfolk to her friend, Miss Jane Pollard :—"I promised to transcribe some of William's compositions. As I made the promise, I will give you a little sonnet . . . I take the first that offers. It is very valuable to me, because the cause which gave birth to it was the favourite evening walk of William and me . . . I have not chosen this sonnet from any particular beauty it has. *It was the first I laid my hands upon.*" From the clause I have italicised, it would almost seem that other sonnets belong to that period, viz., before 1793, when *The Evening Walk* appeared. She would hardly have spoken of it as she did, if this was

the only sonnet her brother had then written. Though very inferior to his later work, this Forncett sonnet—as it may perhaps be called—may be reproduced as a specimen of Wordsworth's earlier manner—before he had broken away, by the force of his own imagination, from the trammels of the conventional style—

Sweet was the walk along the narrow lane  
 At noon, the bank and hedgerows all the way  
 Shagged with wild pale-green tufts of fragrant Hay,  
 Caught by the hawthorns from our loaded Wain,  
 Which Age with many a slow stoop strove to gain ;  
 And Childhood seeming still more busy, took  
 His little rake, with cunning side-long look  
 Sauntering to pluck the strawberries wild unseen,  
*Now* too on Melancholy's idle Dream,  
 Musing, the live spot with my soul agrees  
 Quiet and dark ; for, through the thick-wove trees  
 Scarce peeps the curious Star till solemn gleams  
 The clouded Moon, and calls me forth to stray  
 Through tall green silent woods and ruins gray.

From the above, it will be seen that Wordsworth's memory cannot be always relied upon, in reference to dates, and similar details, in these Fenwick memoranda.—ED.

## PERSONAL TALK.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The last line but two stood, at first, better and more characteristically, thus :—

“ By my half-kitchen and half-parlour fire.”

My sister and I were in the habit of having the tea-kettle in our little sitting room ; and we toasted the bread ourselves, which reminds me of a little circumstance not unworthy to be set down among these minutiae. Happening both of us to be engaged a few minutes one morning when we had a young prig of a Scotch lawyer to breakfast with us, my dear Sister, with her usual simplicity, past the toasting fork with a slice of bread into the hands of this Edinburgh genius. Our little book-case stood on one side of the fire. To prevent loss of time, he took down a book, and fell to reading, to the neglect of the toast, which was burnt to a cinder. Many a time have we laughed at this circumstance, and other cottage simplicities of that day. By the bye, I have a spite at one of this series of Sonnets (I will leave the reader to discover which) as having been the means of nearly putting off for ever

our acquaintance with dear Miss Fenwick, who has always stigmatized one line of it as vulgar, and worthy only of having been composed by a country squire.]

## I.

I AM not One who much or oft delight  
To season my fireside with personal talk,—  
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,  
Or neighbours, daily, weekly in my sight :  
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright,  
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,  
These all wear out of me, like Forms with chalk  
Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast night.  
Better than such discourse doth silence long,  
Long, barren silence, square with my desire ;  
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,  
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,<sup>1</sup>  
And listen to the flapping of the flame,  
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

## II.

"Yet life," you say, "is life ; we have seen and see,  
And with a living pleasure we describe ;  
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe  
The languid mind into activity.  
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee  
Are fostered by the comment and the gibe."  
Even be it so : yet still among your tribe,  
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not me !  
Children are blest, and powerful ; their world lies  
More justly balanced ; partly at their feet,

<sup>1</sup> 1815.

By my half-kitchen my half-parlour fire.

1807.

And part far from them :—sweetest melodies  
 Are those that are by distance made more sweet ;  
 Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,  
 He is a Slave ; the meanest we can meet !

## III.

Wings have we,—and as far as we can go  
 We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood,  
 Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood  
 Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
 Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we know,  
 Are a substantial world, both pure and good :  
 Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,  
 Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
 There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,  
 Matter wherein right voluble I am,  
 To which I listen with a ready ear ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—<sup>2</sup>  
 The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;  
 And heavenly Una, with her milk-white Lamb.

## IV.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
 Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote  
 From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,  
 Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.  
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Then do I find a never-failing store  
 Of personal themes, and such as I love best ;  
 Matter wherein right voluble I am :

1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

Two will I mention dearer than the rest,

1807

Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought:  
 And thus from day to day my little boat  
 Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.  
 Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,  
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—  
 The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !  
 Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,  
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

The stanza referred to as disliked by Miss Fenwick is the first.

The text of this poem was little altered, and was fixed in 1829.

The

half-kitchen and half-parlour fire

of 1807, was a reminiscence of Dove Cottage, which we regret to lose in the later editions.

In the Baptistry of Westminster Abbey, there is a statue of Wordsworth of great merit by Frederick Thrupp, placed there by the late Dean Stanley, beside busts of Keble, Maurice, and Charles Kingsley. Underneath the statue of Wordsworth are the four lines from *Personal Talk*—

Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,  
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—  
 The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !

Dean Stanley found it difficult to select from Wordsworth's poems the lines most appropriate for inscription, and adopted this at the suggestion of his friend, Principal Shairp.

With the lines—

Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,  
 He is a Slave, &c.,

compare *The Prelude*, Book XII. (Vol. III. p. 368)—

I knew a maid,  
 A young enthusiast who escaped these bonds ;  
 Her eye was not the mistress of her heart.

—ED.



## ADMONITION.

Intended more particularly for the perusal of those who may have happened to be enamoured of some beautiful Place of Retreat, in the Country of the Lakes.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

WELL may'st thou halt—and gaze with brightening eye!<sup>1</sup>  
 The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook  
 Hath stirred thee deeply ; with its own dear brook,  
 Its own small pasture, almost its own sky !  
 But covet not the Abode :—forbear to sigh,<sup>2</sup>  
 As many do, repining while they look ;  
 Intruders—who would tear from Nature's book<sup>3</sup>  
 This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.<sup>4</sup>  
 Think what the home must be if it were thine,<sup>5</sup>  
 Even thine, though few thy wants !—Roof, window, door,  
 The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,  
 The roses to the porch which they entwine :  
 Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the day  
 On which it should be touched, would melt away.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Yes, there is holy pleasure in thine eye !

1807

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

. . . . oh ! do not sigh,

1807.

<sup>3</sup> 1827.

Sighing a wish to tear from Nature's Book

1807.

<sup>4</sup> 1827.

This blissful leaf, with worst impiety.

1807.

This blissful leaf with harsh impiety.

1815.

<sup>5</sup> 1827.

Think what the Home would be if it were thine,

1807.

<sup>6</sup> 1827.

. . . would melt and melt away.

1807.

With the lines—

its own dear brook,  
Its own small pasture, almost its own sky !

compare those in *Peter Bell*—

Where deep and low the hamlets lie  
Beneath their little patch of sky,  
And little lot of stars.

The Cottage at Town-end, Grasmere—where this Sonnet was composed—may have suggested it. Some of the details, however, are scarcely applicable to Dove Cottage; the “brook” (referred to elsewhere) is outside the orchard ground, and there is scarcely anything in the garden to warrant the phrase, “its own small pasture.” It is unnecessary to localise the allusions.—ED.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

“BELOVED Vale!” I said, “When I shall con  
Those many records of my childish years,  
Remembrance of myself and of my peers  
Will press me down: to think of what is gone  
Will be an awful thought, if life have one.”  
But, when into the Vale I came, no fears  
Distressed me; from mine eyes escaped no tears;<sup>1</sup>  
Deep thought, or dread remembrance, had I none.<sup>2</sup>  
By doubts and thousand petty fancies crost<sup>3</sup>  
I stood, of simple shame the blushing Thrall;

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Distressed me; I looked round, I shed no tears; 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Deep thought, or awful vision, I had none. 1807.

. . . . . had I none. 1827.

<sup>3</sup> 1827.

By thousand petty fancies I was crossed. 1807.

So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields so small!<sup>1</sup>  
 A Juggler's balls old Time about him tossed;  
 I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed; and all  
 The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

Doubtless the "Vale" referred to is that of Hawkshead; the Brooks, the one that feeds Esthwaite, and Sawrey beck, but above all, "the famous brook within our garden boxed." (See *The Prelude*, *passim*, and *The Fountain*.)—ED.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks  
 The wayward brain, to saunter through a wood!  
 An old place, full of many a lovely brood,  
 Tall trees, green arbours, and ground-flowers in flocks;  
 And wild rose tip-toe upon hawthorn stocks,  
 Like a bold Girl, who plays her agile pranks<sup>2</sup>  
 At Wakes and Fairs with wandering Mountebanks,—  
 When she stands cresting the Clown's head, and mocks  
 The crowd beneath her. Verily I think,  
 Such place to me is sometimes like a dream  
 Or map of the whole world: thoughts, link by link,  
 Enter through ears and eyesight, with such gleam  
 Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,  
 And leap at once from the delicious stream.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

To see the Trees, which I had thought so tall,  
 Mere dwarfs; the Brooks so narrow, Fields so small. 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

Like to a bonny Lass, who plays her pranks. 1807.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

— “they are of the sky,  
And from our earthly memory fade away.”

THOSE words were uttered as in pensive mood<sup>1</sup>  
We turned, departing from that solemn sight :<sup>2</sup>  
A contrast and reproach to gross delight,  
And life's unspiritual pleasures daily wooed !  
But now upon this thought I cannot brood ;  
It is unstable as a dream of night ;<sup>3</sup>  
Nor will I praise a cloud, however bright,  
Disparaging Man's gifts, and proper food.  
Grove, isle, with every shape of sky-built dome,<sup>4</sup>  
Though clad in colours beautiful and pure,  
Find in the heart of man no natural home :  
The immortal Mind craves objects that endure :  
These cleave to it ; from these it cannot roam,  
Nor they from it : their fellowship is secure.

COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF GRASMERE LAKE.  
1807.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1819.

CLOUDS, lingering yet, extend in solid bars<sup>5</sup>  
Through the grey west ; and lo ! these waters, steeled

- |                    |   |       |
|--------------------|---|-------|
| <sup>1</sup> 1845. | These words . . . . .                           | 1807. |
|                    | . . . . . in a pensive mood                     | 1815. |
| <sup>2</sup> 1827. | Mine eyes, yet lingering on that solemn sight : | 1815. |
| <sup>3</sup> 1827. | It is unstable, and deserts me quite ;          | 1807. |
| <sup>4</sup> 1827. | The Grove, the sky-built Temple, and the Dome,  | 1807. |
| <sup>5</sup> 1832. | Eve's lingering clouds extend in solid bars.    | 1819. |

By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield  
 A vivid repetition of the stars ;  
 Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars  
 Amid his fellows beauteously revealed  
 At happy distance from earth's groaning field,  
 Where ruthless mortals wage incessant wars.  
 Is it a mirror ?—or the nether Sphere  
 Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds  
 Her own calm fires ?<sup>1</sup> But list ! a voice is near ;  
 Great Pan himself low-whispering through the reeds,  
 " Be thankful, thou ; for, if unholy deeds  
 Ravage the world, tranquillity is here ! "

Notwithstanding the date given by Wordsworth to this sonnet, it must be assigned to the previous year, for the reason stated in the prefatory note to the poems belonging to 1806 (see p. 1). It was first published along with *The Waggoner* in 1819.—ED.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the sky,  
 How silently, and with how wan a face !\*  
 Where art thou ? Thou so often seen on high<sup>2</sup>  
 Running among the clouds a Wood-nymph's race !  
 Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's a sigh  
 Which they would stifle, move at such a pace !  
 The northern Wind, to call thee to the chase,  
 Must blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I  
 The power of Merlin, Goddess ! this should be :

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Opening its vast abyss, where fancy feeds	
On the rich show ! . . . . .	1819.
Opening to view the abyss in which it feeds	1827.
Its own . . . . .	

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

. . . . . Thou whom I have seen on high	1807.
---	-------

---

\* From a sonnet of Sir Philip Sydney. 1807

And all the stars, fast as the clouds were riven,<sup>1</sup>  
 Should sally forth, to keep thee company,<sup>2</sup>  
 Hurrying and sparkling through the clear blue heaven;<sup>3</sup>  
 But, Cynthia! should to thee the palm be given,  
 Queen both for beauty and for majesty.

The sonnet of Sir Philip Sidney's, from which the two first lines of this one are taken, is No. XXXI. of his *Astrophel and Stella*.—Ed.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

THE world is too much with us : late and soon,  
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :  
 Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !  
 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;  
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;  
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

And all the Stars, now shrouded up in heaven, 1807.  
 And the keen Stars, fast as the clouds were riven, 1827.

<sup>2</sup> 1807.

Should sally forth, an emulous company, 1827-1832.  
 1836 returns to text of 1807.

<sup>3</sup> 1842.

What strife would then be yours, fair Creatures, driven  
 Now up, now down, and sparkling in your glee ! 1807.  
 Sparkling and hurrying through the clear blue heaven. 1827.  
 All hurrying with thee through the clear blue heaven. 1832.  
 In that keen sport along the plain of heaven. 1836.  
 Hurrying and sparkling through the clear blue Heaven. c.  
 . . . . . in emulous company,  
 Sparkling and hurrying through the clear blue Heaven. c.  
 With emulous brightness through the clear blue Heaven. c.

It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be  
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;  
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;  
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

The "pleasant lea" referred to in this sonnet is unknown. It may have been on the Cumbrian coast, or in the Isle of Man. Before 1805, Wordsworth had lived for four weeks in the Isle of Man, in daily sight of Peele Castle.—ED.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

WITH Ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh,  
 Like stars in heaven, and joyously it showed ;  
 Some lying fast at anchor in the road,  
 Some veering up and down, one knew not why.  
 A goodly Vessel did I then espy  
 Come like a giant from a haven broad ;  
 And lustily along the bay she strode,  
 Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.  
 This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,  
 Yet I pursued her with a Lover's look ;  
 This Ship to all the rest did I prefer :  
 When will she turn, and whither ? She will brook  
 No tarrying : where She comes the winds must stir :  
 On went She, and due north her journey took.

Probably observed during the visit to the Isle of Man, referred to in the note to the previous sonnet.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Have sight of Proteus coming from the sea.

1807.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship must go ?  
 Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,  
 Festively she puts forth in trim array ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow ?  
 What boots the inquiry ?—Neither friend nor foe  
 She cares for ; let her travel where she may  
 She finds familiar names, a beaten way  
 Ever before her, and a wind to blow.  
 Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark ?  
 And, almost as it was when ships were rare,  
 (From time to time, like Pilgrims, here and there  
 Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,  
 Of the old Sea some reverential fear,  
 Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark !

See note to the previous sonnet.—Ed.

## TO SLEEP.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

O GENTLE SLEEP ! do they belong to thee,  
 These twinklings of oblivion ? Thou dost love  
 To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,  
 A captive never wishing to be free.  
 This tiresome night, O Sleep ! thou art to me  
 A Fly, that up and down himself doth shove  
 Upon a fretful rivulet, now above,  
 Now on the water vexed with mockery.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Festively she puts forth in trim array ;  
 Vigorous as a Lark at break of day :

1807.

As vigorous as a lark . . . . .

1815.



I have no pain that calls for patience, no ;  
 Hence am I <sup>1</sup> cross and peevish as a child :  
 Am pleased by fits to have thee for my foe,  
 Yet ever willing to be reconciled :  
 O gentle Creature ! do not use me so,  
 But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

## TO SLEEP.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,  
 One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees  
 Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,  
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;  
 I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie<sup>2</sup>  
 Sleepless ! and soon the small birds' melodies  
 Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees ;  
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.  
 Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,  
 And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth :  
 So do not let me wear to-night away :  
 Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ?  
 Come, blessed barrier between day and day,<sup>3</sup>  
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

Compare Ovid, *Meta.* Book xi., l. 623 ; Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Act ii., Scene 2 ; *King Henry IV.*, Part ii., Act iii., Scene 1 ; *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act iii., Scene 2.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Hence I am . . . . . 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1845.

I've thought of all by turns ; and still I lie 1807.  
 By turns have all been thought of ; yet I lie 1827.  
 I thought of all by turns, and yet I lie 1836.

<sup>3</sup> 1832.

. . . . . betwixt . . . 1807.

## TO SLEEP.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep !  
 And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names ;  
 The very sweetest, Fancy culls or frames,<sup>1</sup>  
 When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep !  
 Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost steep  
 In rich reward all suffering ; Balm that tames  
 All anguish ; Saint that evil thoughts and aims  
 Takest away, and into souls dost creep,  
 Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone,  
 I surely not a man ungently made,  
 Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is crost ?  
 Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,  
 Mere slave of them who never for thee prayed,  
 Still last to come where thou art wanted most !

MICHAEL ANGELO IN REPLY TO THE PASSAGE UPON  
HIS STATUE OF NIGHT SLEEPING—

In the first volume of Lord Coleridge's copy of the edition of 1836, Wordsworth wrote in MS. two translations of a fragment of Michael Angelo's on Sleep, and a translation of some Latin verses by Thomas Warton on the same subject. These fragments were never included in any edition of his published works, and it is impossible to say to what year they belong. They may appropriately enough find a place after the three sonnets *To Sleep*, belonging to the year 1806, and before the three translations from Michael Angelo, which follow them.—Ed.

*Night Speaks.*

GRATEFUL is Sleep, my life in stonebound fast ;  
 More grateful still : while wrong and shame shall last,  
 On me can Time no happier state bestow  
 Than to be left unconscious of the woe.  
 Ah then, lest you awaken me, speak low.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

The very sweetest words that fancy frames,

1807.

GRATEFUL is Sleep, more grateful still to be  
 Of marble; for while shameless wrong and woe  
 Prevail, 'tis best to neither hear nor see.  
 Then wake me not, I pray you. Hush, speak low.  
 Come, gentle Sleep, Death's image tho' thou art,  
 Come share my couch, nor speedily depart;  
 How sweet thus living without life to lie,  
 Thus without death how sweet it is to die.

The Latin verse by Thomas Warton, of which the last lines are a translation, is as follows:—

Somne veni! quamvis placidissima Mortis imago es,  
 Consortem cupio te tamen esse tori;  
 Huc ades, haud abituro citò! nam sic sine vita  
 Vivere quam suave est, sic sine morte mori!

Thomas Warton, Fellow of Trinity Coll., Oxford, and Professor of Poetry in that University, is chiefly known by his *History of English Poetry* (1774-1781).—ED.

## FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[Translations from Michael Angelo, done at the request of Mr Duppa, whose acquaintance I made through Mr Southey. Mr Duppa was engaged in writing the life of Michael Angelo, and applied to Mr Southey and myself to furnish some specimens of his poetic genius.]

### I.

YES! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,  
 And I be undeluded, unbetrayed;  
 For if of our affections none finds grace<sup>1</sup>  
 In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath God made

<sup>1</sup> 184f.

. . . . none find . . .

1807

The world which we inhabit ? Better plea  
 Love cannot have, than that in loving thee  
 Glory to that eternal Peace is paid,  
 Who such divinity to thee imparts  
 As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.  
 His hope is treacherous only whose love dies  
 With beauty, which is varying every hour ;  
 But, in chaste hearts uninfluenced by the power  
 Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower,  
 That breathes on earth the air of paradise.

## FROM THE SAME.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1807.

## II.

No mortal object did these eyes behold  
 When first they met the placid light of thine,  
 And my Soul felt her destiny divine,  
 And hope of endless peace in me grew bold :  
 Heaven-born, the Soul a heaven-ward course must hold ;  
 Beyond the visible world she soars to seek  
 (For what delights the sense is false and weak)  
 Ideal Form, the universal mould.  
 The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest  
 In that which perishes : nor will he lend  
 His heart to aught which doth on time depend.  
 'Tis sense, unbridled will, and not true love,  
 That kills the soul :<sup>1</sup> love betters what is best,  
 Even here below, but more in heaven above.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

## FROM THE SAME. TO THE SUPREME BEING.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1807.

## III.

THE prayers I make will then be sweet indeed  
 If Thou the spirit give by which I pray :  
 My unassisted heart is barren clay,  
 That of its native self can nothing feed :<sup>1</sup>  
 Of good and pious works thou art the seed,  
 That quickens only where thou say'st it may :<sup>2</sup>  
 Unless Thou show to us thine own true way  
 No man can find it : Father ! Thou must lead.  
 Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts into my mind  
 By which such virtue may in me be bred  
 That in thy holy footsteps I may tread ;  
 The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,  
 That I may have the power to sing of thee,  
 And sound thy praises everlastingly.

The following extract from a letter of Wordsworth's to Sir George Beaumont, dated October 17, 1805, will cast light on the three last sonnets. "I mentioned Michael Angelo's poetry some time ago ; it is the most difficult to construe I ever met with, but just what you would expect from such a man, shewing abundantly how conversant his soul was with great things. There is a mistake in the world concerning the Italian language ; the poetry of Dante and Michael Angelo proves, that if there be little majesty and strength in Italian verse, the fault is in the authors, and not in the tongue. I can translate, and have translated two books of Ariosto, at the rate, nearly, of one hundred lines a day ; but so much meaning has been put by Michael Angelo into so little room, and that meaning sometimes so excellent in itself, that I found the difficulty of translating him insurmountable. I attempted, at least, fifteen of the sonnets, but could not anywhere succeed. I have sent you the only one I was able to finish ; it is far from being the best, or most characteristic, but the others were too much for me."—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Which of its native self . . . . 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

Which quickens only . . . . 1807

## TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[This young man, Raisley Calvert, to whom I was so much indebted, died at Penrith, 1795.]

CALVERT ! it must not be unheard by them  
 Who may respect my name, that I to thee  
 Owed many years of early liberty.  
 This care was thine when sickness did condemn  
 Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem—  
 That I, if frugal and severe, might stray  
 Where'er I liked ; and finally array  
 My temples with the Muse's diadem.  
 Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth ;  
 If there be aught of pure, or good, or great,  
 In my past verse ; or shall be, in the lays  
 Of higher mood, which now I meditate ;  
 It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived, Youth !  
 To think how much of this will be thy praise.

Raisley Calvert was the son of R. Calvert, steward to the Duke of Norfolk. Writing to Sir George Beaumont, on the 20th February 1805, Wordsworth said, "I should have been forced into one of the professions" (the church or law) "by necessity, had not a friend left me £900. This bequest was from a young man with whom, though I call him friend, I had but little connection ; and the act was done entirely from a confidence on his part that I had powers and attainments which might be of use to mankind . . . Upon the interest of the £900, and £100 legacy to my sister, and £100 more which the 'Lyrical Ballads' have brought me, my sister and I contrived to live seven years, nearly eight." To his friend Matthews he wrote, November 7th, 1796, "My friend" (Calvert) "has every symptom of a confirmed consumption, and I cannot think of quitting him in his present debilitated state." And in January 1795 he wrote to Matthews from Penrith (where Calvert was staying), "I have been here for some time. I am still much engaged with my sick friend ; and am sorry to add that he worsens daily . . . he is barely alive." In a letter to Dr Joshua Stanger of Keswick, written in the year 1842, Wordsworth referred thus to

Raisley Calvert. Dr Calvert—a nephew of Raisley, and son of the W. Calvert whom the poet accompanied to the Isle of Wight and Salisbury Plain in 1793—had just died. “His removal (Dr Calvert’s) has naturally thrown my mind back as far as Dr Calvert’s grandfather, his father, and sister (the former of whom was, as you know, among my intimate friends), and his uncle Raisley, whom I have so much cause to remember with gratitude for his testamentary remembrance of me, when the greatest part of my patrimony was kept back from us by injustice. It may be satisfactory to your wife for me to declare” [Mrs Stanger—who still lives—is a daughter of William Calvert] “that my friend’s bequest enabled me to devote myself to literary pursuits, independent of any necessity to look at pecuniary emolument, so that my talents, such as they might be, were free to take their natural course. Your brothers Raisley and William were both so well known to me, and I have so many reasons to respect them, that I cannot forbear saying, that my sympathy with this last bereavement is deepened by the remembrance that they both have been taken from you . . .” On October 1, 1794, Wordsworth wrote from Keswick to Ensign William Calvert about his brother Raisley. (The year is not given in the letter, but it must have been 1794.) He tells him that Raisley was determined to set out for Lisbon; but that he (Wordsworth) could not brook the idea of his going alone; and that he wished to accompany his friend and stay with him, till his health was re-established. He adds, “Reflecting that his return is uncertain, your brother requests me to inform you that he has drawn out his will, which he means to get executed in London. The purport of his will is to leave you all his property, real and personal, chargeable with a legacy of £600 to me, in case that, on inquiry into the state of our affairs in London, he should think it advisable to do so. It is at my request that this information is communicated to you.” Calvert did not live to go south; and he changed the sum left to Wordsworth from £600 to £900. The relationship of the two men suggests the somewhat parallel one between Spinoza and Simon de Vries. For further details, see the *Life of the Poet* in the last volume.—ED.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

[The latter part of this sonnet was a great favourite with my sister S. H. When I saw her lying in death, I could not resist the impulse to compose the Sonnet that follows it.]

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a throne

Which mists and vapours from mine eyes did shroud—

Nor view of who might sit thereon allowed;<sup>1</sup>  
 But all the steps and ground about were strown  
 With sights the ruefullest that flesh and bone  
 Ever put on; a miserable crowd,  
 Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before that cloud,  
 "Thou art our king, O Death! to thee we groan."  
 Those steps I clomb; the mists before me gave<sup>2</sup>  
 Smooth way: and I beheld the face of one  
 Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,  
 With her face up to heaven; that seemed to have  
 Pleasing remembrance of a thought foregone;  
 A lovely Beauty in a summer grave!

"The sonnet that follows," referred to in the Fenwick note, is one belonging to the year 1836, beginning—

"Even so for me a Vision sanctified."

See the note to that sonnet.—ED.

## L I N E S

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one Evening, after a stormy day,  
 the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution  
 of Mr Fox was hourly expected.

Comp. Sept. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

LOUD is the Vale! the Voice is up  
 With which she speaks when storms are gone,  
 A mighty unison of streams!  
 Of all her Voices, One!

<sup>1</sup> 1815.

Nor view of him who sate thereon allowed; 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1845.

I seemed to mount those steps; the vapours gave 1807.

Those steps I mounted, as the vapours gave 1836.

Those steps I mounted, which the vapours gave C.

Those steps I clomb; the opening vapours gave C. & 1843.



Loud is the Vale ;—this inland Depth  
In peace is roaring like the Sea ;  
Yon star upon the mountain-top  
Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest ;  
Importunate and heavy load !\*  
The Comforter had found me here,  
Upon this lonely road ;

And many thousands now are sad—  
Wait the fulfilment of their fear ;  
For he must die who is their stay,  
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth  
To breathless Nature's dark abyss ;  
But when the great and good depart<sup>1</sup>  
What is it more than this—

That Man, who is from God sent forth,  
Doth yet again to God return ?—  
Such ebb and flow must ever be,  
Then wherefore should we mourn ?

Charles James Fox died September 13, 1806. He was Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time, having assumed office on the 5th February, shortly after the death of William Pitt. Wordsworth's sadness on this occasion, his recognition of Fox as great and good, and as "a power" that was "passing from the earth," may have been due partly to personal and political sympathy, but also probably to Fox's appreciation of the better side of the French Revolution, and to his

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

But when the Mighty pass away

1807.

---

\* Note to edd. 1807 and onwards :—"Importuna e grave salma."—Michael Angelo.

welcoming the pacific proposals of Talleyrand, perhaps also to his efforts for the abolition of slavery.

The "lonely road" referred to in these *Lines*, was, in all likelihood, the path from Town-end towards the Swan Inn past the Hollins, Grasmere. A "mighty unison of streams" may be heard there any autumn evening after a stormy day, and especially after long continued rain, the sound of waters from Easdale, from Greenhead Ghyll, and the slopes of Silver How, blending with that of the Rothay in the valley below. The poem was always classed amongst the "Epitaphs and Elegiac Pieces."—ED.

### NOVEMBER, 1806.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1807.

ANOTHER year !—another deadly blow !  
 Another mighty Empire overthrown !  
 And We are left, or shall be left, alone ;  
 The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.<sup>1</sup>  
 'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know  
 That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;  
 That by our own right hands it must be wrought ;  
 That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.  
 O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer !  
 We shall exult, if they who rule the land  
 Be men who hold its many blessings dear,  
 Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,<sup>2</sup>  
 Who are to judge of danger which they fear,  
 And honour which they do not understand.

Napoleon won the battle of Jena on the 14th October 1806, entered Potsdam on the 25th, and Berlin on the 28th ; Prince Hohenlohe laid down his arms on the 6th November ; Blücher surrendered at Lübeck on the 7th ; Magdeburg was taken on the 8th ; on the 14th the French occupied Hanover ; and on the 21st Napoleon issued his Berlin decree for the Blockade of England.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

The last that dares . . . . . 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1820.

. . . . . not a venal Band, 1807.

ADDRESS TO A CHILD,  
DURING A BOISTEROUS WINTER EVENING.

BY MY SISTER.

Comp. 1806. — Pub. 1815.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere.]

WHAT way does the Wind come ? What way does he go ?  
He rides over the water, and over the snow,  
Through wood, and through vale ; and, o'er rocky height  
Which the goat cannot climb, takes his sounding flight ;  
He tosses about in every bare tree,  
As, if you look up, you plainly may see ;  
But how he will come, and whither he goes,  
There's never a scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook,  
And ring a sharp 'larum ;—but, if you should look,  
There's nothing to see but a cushion of snow  
Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,  
And softer than if it were covered with silk.  
Sometimes he'll hide in the cave of a rock,  
Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock ;  
—Yet seek him,—and what shall you find in the place ?  
Nothing but silence and empty space ;  
Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,  
That he's left, for a bed, to beggars or thieves !

As soon as 'tis daylight to-morrow, with me  
You shall go to the orchard, and then you will see  
That he has been there, and made a great rout,  
And cracked the branches, and strewn them about ;



## O D E.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD.

Comp. 1803-6 — Pub. 1807.

[This was composed during my residence at Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere—

“A simple child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death!”—

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that my difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines—

“Obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings,” &c.

To that dream-like vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here; but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion, which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of man presents an analogy

in its favour. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations ; and, among all persons acquainted with classic literature, is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind ? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the " Immortality of the Soul," I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorizing me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet.]

The Child is father of the Man ;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.  
(See vol. II. p. 260.)

## I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,  
The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem  
Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—<sup>1</sup>  
Turn whereso'er I may,  
By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

## II.

The Rainbow comes and goes,  
And lovely is the Rose,  
The Moon doth with delight  
Look round her when the heavens are bare,  
Waters on a starry night  
Are beautiful and fair ;  
The sunshine is a glorious birth ;  
But yet I know, where'er I go,  
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

<sup>1</sup> 1820.

. . . as it has been . . .

## III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
 And while the young lambs bound  
 As to the tabor's sound,  
 To me alone there came a thought of grief :  
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
 And I again am strong :  
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;  
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;  
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,  
 The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep.  
 And all the earth is gay ;  
 Land and sea  
 Give themselves up to jollity,  
 And with the heart of May  
 Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—  
 Thou Child of Joy,  
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy  
 Shepherd-boy !

## IV.

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call  
 Ye to each other make ; I see  
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;  
 My heart is at your festival,  
 My head hath its coronal,  
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.  
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen  
 While Earth herself is adorning,<sup>1</sup>  
 This sweet May-morning,  
 And the Children are culling<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

While the Earth herself . . .

1807.

. . . the Earth itself . . .

1827.

the Earth herself . . .

1832.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

And the children are pulling

1807.

IV.

D

On every side,  
In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm,  
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm :—  
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !  
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,  
A single Field which I have looked upon,  
Both of them speak of something that is gone :  
The Pansy at my feet  
Doth the same tale repeat :  
Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?  
Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

## V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar :  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home :  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,  
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows  
He sees it in his joy ;  
The Youth, who daily farthest from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended ;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.



## VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,  
    And no unworthy aim,  
    The homely Nurse doth all she can  
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,  
    Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he came.

## VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,  
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !  
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,  
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
With light upon him from his father's eyes !  
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,  
Some fragment from his dream of human life,  
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art ;  
    A wedding or a festival,  
    A mourning or a funeral ;  
    And this hath now his heart,  
And unto this he frames his song :  
    Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;  
    But it will not be long  
    Ere this be thrown aside,  
    And with new joy and pride  
The little Actor cons another part ;  
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'  
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,  
That Life brings with her in her equipage ;  
    As if his whole vocation  
Were endless imitation.

## VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
     Thy Soul's immensity ;  
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep  
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,  
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,  
 Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—  
     Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !  
     On whom those truths do rest,  
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,  
 A Presence which is not to be put by ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might  
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,<sup>3</sup>  
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke  
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?  
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,  
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

<sup>1</sup> This line is not in the editions of 1807, 1815.

<sup>2</sup> The editions of 1807 and 1815 have, after "put by :"

To whom the grave  
 Is but a lowly bed without the sense or sight  
     Of day or the warm light,  
 A place of thought where we in waiting lie ;

<sup>3</sup> 1815.

Of untamed pleasures, on thy Being's height.

1807.

## IX.

O joy! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed  
Perpetual benediction:<sup>1</sup> not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be blest;  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—<sup>2</sup>

Not for these I raise  
The song of thanks and praise;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature  
Moving about in worlds not realised,  
High<sup>3</sup> instincts before which our mortal Nature  
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:

But for those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections,  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Perpetual benedictions: . . . . 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1815.Of Childhood, whether fluttering or at rest,  
With new-born hope for ever in his breast: 1807.<sup>3</sup> 1815.

Uphold us, cherish us, and make 1807.

Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,  
    To perish never ;  
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,  
    Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy !  
    Hence in a season of calm weather  
    Though inland far we be,  
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea  
    Which brought us hither,  
    Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the Children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

## X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !  
    And let the young Lambs bound  
    As to the tabor's sound !  
We in thought will join your throng,  
    Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
    Ye that through your hearts to-day  
    Feel the gladness of the May !  
What though the radiance which was once so bright  
Be now for ever taken from my sight,  
    Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower ;  
    We will grieve not, rather find  
    Strength in what remains behind ;  
    In the primal sympathy  
    Which having been must ever be ;  
    In the soothing thoughts that spring

Out of human suffering ;  
 In the faith that looks through death  
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## XI.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
 Forebode not any severing of our loves !<sup>1</sup>  
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;  
 I only have relinquished one delight  
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,  
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;  
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
     Is lovely yet ;  
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun  
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;  
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears. "

The edition of 1807 concluded with this poem, which Wordsworth simply named *Ode*, prefixing to it the motto, "Paulò majora canamus." In 1815, when he revised the poem throughout, he named it, in the characteristic manner of many of his titles—diffuse and yet precise—*Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* ; and he then prefixed to it the lines of his own earlier poem on the Rainbow (March 1802) :—

The child is Father of the Man ;  
 And I could wish my days to be  
     Bound each to each by natural piety.

This longer title and motto it retained in all the subsequent editions.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Think not of any severing . . . . . 1807.

In edd. 1807 to 1820, it was placed by itself at the end of the poems, and formed their natural conclusion and climax. In edd. 1827 and 1832, it was placed, inappropriately, amongst the "Epitaphs and Elegiac Pœms." The evident mistake of placing it amongst these seems to have suggested to him in 1836 its having a place by itself,—which place it retained in the subsequent editions of 1842 and 1849,—when it closed the series of minor poems in vol. V., and preceded the Excursion in vol. VI. The same arrangement was adopted in the double-columned single volume edition of 1845.

The *Ode on Immortality* was written at intervals, between the years 1803 and 1806; and it was subjected to frequent and careful revision. No poem of Wordsworth's bears more evident traces in its structure at once of inspiration and elaboration; of original flight of thought and *afflatus* on the one hand, and on the other of careful sculpture and fastidious choice of phrase. But it is remarkable that there are very few changes of text in the successive editions. Most of the alterations were made before 1815, and the omission of some feeble lines which originally stood in stanza VIII., in the editions of 1807 and 1815, was a great advantage in disencumbering the poem. The main revision and elaboration of this Ode, however—an elaboration which suggests the passage of the glacier ice over the rocks of White Moss Common, where the poem was murmured out stanza by stanza—was all finished before it first saw the light in 1807. In form it is irregular and original. And perhaps the most remarkable thing in its structure, is the frequent change of the keynote, and the skill and delicacy with which the transitions are made. "The feet throughout are iambic. The lines vary in length from the Alexandrine to the line with two accents. There is a constant ebb and flow in the full tide of song, but scarce two waves are alike." (Hawes Turner, *Selections from Wordsworth*.)

In the "notes" to the *Selections* just referred to, there is an excellent commentary on this *Ode on Immortality*, almost every line of which is worthy of minute analysis and study. Several of the following are suggested by Mr Turner.

(1.) *The winds come to me, from the fields of sleep,*

The morning breeze blowing from the fields that were dark during the hours of sleep.

(2.) *But there's a tree, of many, one,*

Compare Browning's *May and Death*—

Only one little sight, one plant  
Woods have in May, &c.

(3.) *The pansy at my feet  
Doth the same tale repeat,*

French "Pensée." "Pansies, that's for thoughts." Ophelia in *Hamlet*.

- (4.) *Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,*

This thought Wordsworth owed, consciously or unconsciously, to Plato. Though he tells us in the Fenwick note that he did not mean to *inculcate* the belief, there is no doubt that he clung to the notion of a life pre-existing the present, on grounds similar to those on which he believed in a life to come. But there are some differences in the way in which the idea commended itself to Plato and to Wordsworth. The stress was laid by Wordsworth on the effect of terrestrial life in putting the higher faculties to sleep, and making us "forget the glories we have known." Plato, on the other hand, looked upon the mingled experiences of mundane life as inducing a gradual but slow remembrance (*ἀνάμνησις*) of the past. Compare Tennyson's *Two Voices*, and Wordsworth's sonnet—

"Man's life is like a sparrow, mighty king."

- (5.) *Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"*

*With all the persons,*

*i.e., with the dramatis personæ.*

- (6.)

*Thou eye among the blind,*

*That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,*

There is an admirable parallel illustration of Wordsworth's use of this figure (describing one sense in terms of another), in the lines in *Aira Force Valley*—

"A soft eye-music of slow waving boughs."

- (7.) *Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,*

*And custom lie upon thee with a weight,*

*Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!*

Compare with this, the lines in the fourth book of *The Excursion*, beginning—

Alas! the endowment of immortal Pain

Is matched unequally with custom, time.

- (8.) *Fallings from us, vanishings,*

The outward sensible universe, visible and tangible, seeming to fall away from us, as unreal, to vanish in unsubstantiality. See the explanation of this youthful experience in the Fenwick note. That confession of his boyish days at Hawkshead, "many times, while going to school, have I grasped at a wall or tree, to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality" (by which he explains those—

fallings from us, vanishings, &c.),

suggests a similar experience and confession of Cardinal Newman's in his *Apologia*. (See p. 67.)

The Rev. Robert Perceval Graves, late of Windermere, now of Dublin,

wrote thus in 1850. "I remember Mr Wordsworth saying, that at a particular stage of his mental progress, he used to be frequently so rapt into an unreal transcendental world of ideas that the external world seemed no longer to exist in relation to him, and he had to reconvince himself of its existence by *clasping a tree*, or something that happened to be near him. I could not help connecting this fact with that obscure passage in his great Ode on the 'Intimations of Immortality,' in which he speaks of—

Those obstinate questionings,  
Of sense and outward things ;  
Fallings from us, vanishings ; &c."

Professor Bonamy Price farther confirms the explanation which Wordsworth gave of the passage, in an account of a conversation he had with the poet, as follows. It was an experience, however, not I think as Mr Price imagines, peculiar to Wordsworth—and its value would be much lessened if it were so—but one to which (as the poet said to Miss Fenwick) "everyone, if he would look back, could bear testimony."

"OXFORD, April 21, 1881.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You will be glad, I am sure, to receive an interpretation, which chance enabled me to obtain from Wordsworth himself of a passage in the immortal Ode to Immortality. . . .

"It happened one day that the poet, my wife, and I were taking a walk together by the side of Rydal Water. We were then by the sycamores under Nab Scar. The aged poet was in a most genial mood, and it suddenly occurred to me that I might, without unwarrantable presumption, seize the golden opportunity thus offered, and ask him to explain these mysterious words. So I addressed him with an apology, and begged him to explain, what my own feeble mother-wit was unable to unravel, and for which I had in vain sought the assistance of others, what were those "fallings from us, vanishings," for which, above all other things, he gave God thanks. The venerable old man raised his aged form erect ; he was walking in the middle, and passed across me to a five-barred gate in the wall which bounded the road on the side of the lake. He clenched the top bar firmly with his right hand, pushed strongly against it, and then uttered these ever-memorable words : 'There was a time in my life when I had to push against something that resisted, to be sure that there was anything outside of me. I was sure of my own mind ; everything else fell away, and vanished into thought.' Thought, he was sure of ; matter for him, at the moment, was an unreality—nothing but a thought. Such natural spontaneous idealism has probably never been felt by any other man.

BONAMY PRICE."

Professor Knight.



The following is from S. T. Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (ch. xxii., p. 229, edd. 1817.)

"To the 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood,' the poet might have prefixed the lines which Dante addresses to one of his own Canzoni—

'Canzone, i' credo, che saranno radi  
Color che tua ragione intendan bene :  
Tanto lor sei faticoso ed alto."

'O lyric song, there will be few, think I,  
Who may thy import understand aright :  
Thou art for them so arduous and so high !'

But the Ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which yet cannot be conveyed, save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain, and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr Wordsworth with believing the Platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of the words, as I am to believe, that Plato himself ever meant or taught it.

Πολλά ἦι ὑπ' ἀγκῶ  
—νος ἀκέα βέλη  
"Εὐδὸν ἐντὶ φάρετρας  
Φωνᾶντα συνεταΐσιν· ἔς  
Δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἐρμηνέων  
Χατίζει. Σοφὸς ὁ πολ-  
-λα ἐιδῶς φυᾶ  
Μαθόντες δὲ λάβροι  
Παγγλωσσία, κόρακες ὥς  
"Ακραντα γάρυετον  
Δίος πρὸς ὀρνίχα θεῖον.

—PINDAR, OLYMP. II. '

The following parallel passages from *The Prelude* and *The Excursion*, Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Keble's *Praelectiones*, and Henry Vaughan, are quoted in an interesting note to the *Ode on Immortality*, in Professor Henry Reed's American edition of the Poems.

Ah ! why in age  
Do we revert so fondly to the walks  
Of childhood—but that there the soul discerns  
The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired  
Of her own native vigour—thence can hear

Reverberations ; and a choral song,  
 Commingling with the incense that ascends  
 Undaunted toward the imperishable heavens  
 From her own lonely altar ?

*The Excursion*, Book IX.

Our childhood sits,  
 Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne  
 That hath more power than all the elements.  
 I guess not what this tells of Being past,  
 Nor what it augurs of the life to come ; &c.

*The Prelude*, Book V.

“ . . . There was never yet the child of any promise (so far as the theoretic faculties are concerned) but awaked to the sense of beauty with the first gleam of reason ; and I suppose there are few, among those who love Nature otherwise than by profession and at second-hand, who look not back to their youngest and least learned days as those of the most intense, superstitious, insatiable, and beatific perception of her splendours. And the bitter decline of this glorious feeling, though many note it not, partly owing to the cares and weight of manhood, which leave them not the time nor the liberty to look for their lost treasure, and partly to the human and divine affections which are appointed to take its place, yet have formed the subject, not indeed of lamentation, but of holy thankfulness for the witness it bears to the immortal origin and end of our nature, to one whose authority is almost without appeal in all questions relating to the influence of external things upon the pure human soul.

Not for these I raise  
 The song of thanks and praise  
 But for those obstinate questionings, &c., &c.

And if it were possible for us to recollect all the unaccountable and happy instincts of the careless time, and to reason upon them with the maturer judgment, we might arrive at more right results than either the philosophy or the sophisticated practice of art has yet attained. But we love the perceptions before we are capable of methodizing or comparing them.”—(Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Vol. II., p. 36, Part iii., ch. v., sec. i.)

“ . . . Etenim qui velit acutius indagare causas propensæ in antiqua sæcula voluntatis, mirum ni conjectura incidat aliquando in commentum illud Pythagoræ, docentis, animarum nostrarum non tum fieri initium, cum in hoc mundo nascimur ; immo ex ignota quadam regione venire eas, in sua quamque corpora ; neque tam penitus Lethæo potu imbui, quin permanet quasi quidam anteactæ ætatis sapor ; hunc autem excitari identidem, et nescio, quo sensu percipi, tacito quidem illo et obscuro, sed percipi tamen. Atque hac ferme sententia extat summi

hac memoria Poetæ nobilissimum carmen ; nempe non aliam ob causam tangi pueritiæ recordationem exquisita illa ac pervagata dulcedine, quam propter debilem quendam prioris ævi Deique proprioris sensum.

Quamvis autem hanc opinionem vix ferat divinæ philosophiæ ratio, fatemur tamen eam eatenus ad verum accedere, quo sanctum aliquod et grave tribuit memoriæ et caritati puerilium annorum. Nosmet certe infantes novimus quam prope tetigerit Divina benignitas ; quis porro scit, an omni illa temporis anteacti dulcedo habeat quandam significationem Illius Præsentiae ?"—Keble, *Prælectiones de Poeticæ vi Medica*, p. 728, Præl xxxix.

"CORRUPTION

Sure, it was so. Man in those early days  
Was not all stone and earth ;  
He shined a little, and by those weak rays,  
Had some glimpse of his birth.  
He saw Heaven o'er his head, and knew from whence  
He came condemned hither,  
And, as first Love draws strongest, so from hence  
His mind sure progressed thither."

Henry Vaughan, *Silex Scintillans*.

Mr Reed also quotes from the poem *Childe-hood*, in the same volume of Vaughan's. But even a more apposite quotation may be made from *The Retreat*, in the *Silex Scintillans*.

Happy those early dayes, when I  
Shined in my Angell-infancy !  
Before I understood this place  
Appointed for my second race,  
Or taught my soul to fancy ought  
But a white celestiall thought ;  
When yet I had not walkt above  
A mile or two from my first Love,  
And looking back, at that short space,  
Could see a glimpse of his bright face ;  
When on some *gilded Cloud or Flowre*  
My gazing soul would dwell an houre,  
And in those weaker glories spy  
Some shadows of eternity ;

. . . . .

But felt through all this fleshly dresse  
Bright *shootes* of everlastingnesse.

—ED.

## 1807.

In few instances is it more evident that the dates which Wordsworth affixed to his poems in 1815, 1820, 1836, and 1845—and those assigned in the Fenwick notes—cannot be relied upon, than in the case of the poems referring to Coleorton. Trusting to these dates, when constructing the Chronological Table, in the absence of contrary evidence, I assigned the majority of the Coleorton poems to the year 1808. But I now find that while the sonnet to Lady Beaumont was written in 1806, the Inscription for the Seat, beginning—

Beneath yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,

was written, not in 1808 (as stated by Wordsworth himself), but in 1811; and that designed for the Niche in the Winter-garden at Coleorton, probably in the same year; in which year he also wrote the sonnet on Sir George Beaumont's picture of Bredon Hill and Cloud Hill, beginning—

Praised be the art whose subtle power could stay. \*

There is a natural fitness in bringing all the poems referring to Coleorton together, so far as this can be done without seriously interfering with chronological order. The two "inscriptions" intended for these Coleorton grounds, which were written at Grasmere in 1811, are therefore printed along with the poems of 1807; the precise date of each being given—so far as it can be ascertained—along with the title.

Several political sonnets, and others, were written in 1807; also the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, and the first and larger parts of *The White Doe of Rylstone*, with a few minor fragments. But, for reasons stated in the notes to *The White Doe* (see p. 191), I have assigned that poem to the year 1808. The *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle* forms as natural a preface to *The White Doe*, as *The Force of Prayer a Tradition of Bolton Abbey*, is its natural appendix. The latter was written, however, before *The White Doe* was finished.

It would be easier to fix the previous date of some of the poems written between the years 1806 and 1808, if we knew the exact month in which the two volumes of 1807 were published.

On November 10, 1806, Wordsworth wrote to Sir George Beaumont from Coleorton, "In a day or two I mean to send a sheet or two of my intended volume to the press" (evidently referring to the poems of 1807). On the following day—11th November 1806—Dorothy Wordsworth wrote to Lady Beaumont, "William has written two other poems, which you will see when they are printed. He composes frequently in the grove. . . . We have not yet received a sheet from the printer." On the 15th November 1806 she again wrote to Lady

Beaumont (from Coleorton), "My brother works very hard at his poems, preparing them for the press. Miss Hutchinson is the subscriber." In a subsequent letter from Coleorton, undated, but bearing the post mark February 18, 1807, she is speaking of her brother's poetical labour, and says, "He must go on, when he begins: and any interruptions (such as attending to the progress of the workmen and planning the garden) is of the greatest use to him; for, after a certain time, the progress is by no means proportioned to the labour in composition; and if he is called from it by other thoughts, he returns to it with ten times the pleasure, and the work goes on proportionately the more rapidly." From this we must infer that the years 1806-7 were productive ones.—Ed.

## A PROPHECY. FEBRUARY, 1807.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1807.

HIGH deeds, O Germans, are to come from you!  
 Thus in your books the record shall be found,  
 "A watchword was pronouced, a potent sound—  
 ARMINIUS!\*—all the people quaked like dew  
 Stirred by the breeze; they rose, a Nation, true,  
 True to herself<sup>1</sup>—the mighty Germany,  
 She of the Danube and the Northern Sea,  
 She rose, and off at once the yoke she threw.  
 All power was given her in the dreadful trance:  
 Those new-born Kings she withered like a flame."†

<sup>1</sup> 1820.

True to itself . . . . .

1807.

---

\* *Arminius*, or Hermann, the liberator of Germany from the Roman power, A.D. 9-17. Tacitus says of him, "He was without doubt the deliverer of Germany; and, unlike other kings and generals, he attacked the Roman people, not at the commencement, but in the fulness of their power: in battles he was not always successful, but he was invincible in war. He still lives in the songs of the barbarians."—Ed.

† The "new-born Kings" were the lesser German potentates, united in the Confederation of the Rhine. By a treaty signed at Paris (July 12th, 1806), by Talleyrand, and the ministers of twelve sovereign houses of the Empire, these princes declared themselves perpetually severed from Germany, and united together as the Confederate States of the Rhine, of which the Emperor of the French was declared Protector.—Ed.

—Woe to them all ! but heaviest woe and shame  
 To that Bavarian who, could first advance<sup>1</sup>  
 His banner in accursed league with France,\*  
 First open traitor to the German name !<sup>2</sup>

## THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1807.

[This was composed while pacing to and fro between the Hall of Coleorton, then rebuilding, and the principal Farm-house of the Estate, in which we lived for nine or ten months. I will here mention that the Song on the Restoration of Lord Clifford, as well as that on the Feast of Brougham Castle, were produced on the same ground.]

Two Voices are there ; one is of the sea,  
 One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :  
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty !  
 There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee  
 Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :  
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,  
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.  
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :  
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

. . . who did first advance . . . 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

First open Traitor to her sacred name, . . . 1807.

. . . to a . . . 1827.

---

\* On December 11, 1806, Napoleon concluded a treaty with Frederick Augustus, the Elector of Saxony—who had been secretly on the side of France all along—to whom he gave additional territories, and the title of King, admitting him into “the Confederation of the Rhine.” He had fallen, as one of the Prussian statesmen put it, into “that lowest of degradations, to steal at another man’s bidding.”—ED.

For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be  
 That Mountain floods should thunder as before,  
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
 And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

In 1807, the whole of the Continent of Europe was prostrate under Napoleon. It is impossible to say to what special incident (if to any in particular) Wordsworth refers in the phrase, "with holy glee thou fought'st against him:" but, as the sonnet was composed at Col-eorton in 1807—after Austerlitz and Jena, and Napoleon's practical mastery of Europe—our knowledge of the particular event or events in Swiss history to which he refers, would not add much to our understanding of the poem. In the Fenwick note Wordsworth incorrectly separates his song on the Restoration of Lord Clifford from that at the Feast of Brougham Castle. They are the same song.—ED.

TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASSING OF  
 THE BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE  
 TRADE.

March, 1807.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1807.

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to climb :  
 How toilsome—nay, how dire—it was, by thee  
 Is known ; by none, perhaps, so feelingly :  
 But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,  
 Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime,<sup>1</sup>  
 Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,  
 Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,  
 First roused thee.—O true yoke-fellow of Time,  
 Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm <sup>2</sup>  
 Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn !

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Didst first lead forth this pilgrimage sublime, 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

With unabating effort, see, the palm 1807.

The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn ;  
 And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,<sup>1</sup>  
 A great man's happiness ; thy zeal shall find  
 Repose at length, firm friend of human kind !

On the 25th of March 1807, the Royal assent was given to the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. The movement for its abolition was begun by Wilberforce, and carried on by Clarkson. Its abolition was voted by the House of Lords on the motion of Lord Grenville, and in the Commons on the motion of Charles James Fox on the 10th of June 1806. The bill was read a second time in the Lords on the 5th of February, and became law on the 25th of March 1807.—ED.

## THE MOTHER'S RETURN.

BY MY SISTER.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1815.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere.]

A MONTH, sweet little-ones, is past  
 Since your dear Mother went away,—  
 And she to-morrow will return ;  
 To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings ! thought of joy !  
 The eldest heard with steady glee ;  
 Silent he stood ; then laughed amain,—  
 And shouted, " Mother, come to me ! "

Louder and louder did he shout,  
 With witless hope to bring her near ;  
 " Nay, patience ! patience, little boy !  
 Your tender mother cannot hear."

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

The bloody Writing is for ever torn ;  
 And thou henceforth shalt have . . .



I told of hills, and far-off towns,  
And long, long vales to travel through ;—  
He listens, puzzled, sore perplexed,  
But he submits ; what can he do ?

No strife disturbs his sister's breast ;  
She wars not with the mystery  
Of time and distance, night and day ;  
The bonds of our humanity.

Her joy is like an instinct, joy  
Of kitten, bird, or summer fly ;  
She dances, runs without an aim,  
She chatters in her ecstasy.

Her brother now takes up the note,  
And echoes back his sister's glee :  
They hug the infant in my arms,  
As if to force his sympathy.

Then, settling into fond discourse,  
We rested in the garden bower ;  
While sweetly shone the evening sun  
In his departing hour.

We told o'er all that we had done,—  
Our rambles by the swift brook's side  
Far as the willow-skirted pool,  
Where two fair swans together glide.

We talked of change, of winter gone,  
Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,  
Of birds that build their nests and sing,  
And all "since mother went away !"

To her these tales they will repeat,  
 To her our new-born tribes will show,  
 The goslings green, the ass's colt,  
 The lambs that in the meadow go.

—But, see, the evening star comes forth !  
 To bed the children must depart ;  
 A moment's heaviness they feel,  
 A sadness at the heart :

'Tis gone—and in a merry fit  
 They run up stairs in gamesome race ;  
 I, too, infected by their mood,  
 I could have joined the wanton chase.

Five minutes past—and, O the change !  
 Asleep upon their beds they lie ;  
 Their busy limbs in perfect rest,  
 And closed the sparkling eye.

The Fenwick note is inaccurate. These lines were written by Miss Wordsworth at Coleorton, on the eve of her brother and sister's return in the spring of 1807 from London, whither they had gone for a month—Dorothy remaining at Coleorton, in charge of the children. The poem was placed by Wordsworth amongst those “referring to the period of childhood.”—Ed.

## GIPSIES.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1807.

[Composed at Coleorton. I had observed them, as here described, near Castle Donnington, on my way to and from Derby.]

YET are they here the same unbroken knot <sup>1</sup>  
 Of human Beings, in the self-same spot !  
     Men, women, children, yea the frame  
     Of the whole spectacle the same !

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Yet are they here ?—the same unbroken knot

1807.

Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,  
 Now deep and red, the colouring of night,  
     That on their Gipsy-faces falls,  
     Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.  
 —Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours are gone, while I  
 Have been a traveller under open sky,  
     Much witnessing of change and cheer,  
     Yet as I left I find them here !  
 The weary Sun betook himself to rest ;—  
 Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,  
     Outshining like a visible God  
     The glorious path in which he trod.  
 And now, ascending, after one dark hour  
 And one night's diminution of her power,  
     Behold the mighty Moon ! this way  
     She looks as if at them—but they  
 Regard not her :—oh better wrong and strife <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Regard not her :—oh better wrong and strife,  
 Better vain deeds or evil than such life !  
     The silent Heavens have goings-on ;  
     The stars have tasks—but these have none. 1807.

Regard not her :—oh better wrong and strife,  
 (By nature transient) than such torpid life !  
     The silent Heavens have goings-on :  
     The stars have tasks—but these have none !  
 Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven and earth !  
 In scorn I speak not ;—they are what their birth  
     And breeding suffers them to be ;  
     Wild outcasts of society ! 1820.

Regard her not ; oh better wrong and strife  
 (By nature transient) than such torpid life ;  
     Life which the very stars reprove  
     As on their silent tasks they move !  
 Yet witness all that stirs in heaven or earth !  
 In scorn I speak not : they are what their birth  
     And breeding suffers them to be ;  
     Wild outcasts of society ! 1827.

(By nature transient) than this torpid life ;  
 Life which the very stars reprove  
 As on their silent tasks they move !  
 Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth !  
 In scorn I speak not ;—they are what their birth  
 And breeding suffer them to be ;  
 Wild outcasts of society !

In all the editions this poem was placed by Wordsworth amongst those of the *Imagination*.—ED.

Comp. 1807 (probably). — Pub. 1807.

[Written at Town-end, Grasmere. (Mrs W. says in a note—"At Coleorton.")]

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art  
 A creature of a ' fiery heart : '—<sup>1</sup>  
 These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce ;  
 Tumultuous harmony and fierce !  
 Thou sing'st as if the God of wine  
 Had helped thee to a Valentine ;  
 A song in mockery and despite  
 Of shades, and dews, and silent night ;  
 And steady bliss, and all the loves  
 Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say  
 His homely tale, this very day ;  
 His voice was buried among trees,  
 Yet to be come-at by the breeze :  
 He did not cease ; but cooed—and cooed  
 And somewhat pensively he wooed :

<sup>1</sup> 1807, and returned to in 1820.

A creature of ebullient heart,

He sang of love, with quiet blending,  
 Slow to begin, and never ending;  
 Of serious faith, and inward glee:  
 That was the song—the song for me!

Mrs Wordsworth corrected her husband's note to Miss Fenwick, by adding in the MS. "at Coleorton;" and at Coleorton the Wordsworths certainly spent the winter of 1806, the Town-end Cottage at Grasmere being too small for their increasing household. It is certainly much more likely that Wordsworth wrote this poem at Coleorton than at Grasmere. It bears all the signs of being an evening impromptu, after hearing both the nightingale and the stock-dove; and there are no nightingales at Grasmere, while they abound in the "peaceful groves" of Coleorton. If the locality was—as Mrs Wordsworth states it—Coleorton, the year must be 1807, and not 1806 (the poet's own date). The nightingale is a summer visitant in this country, and could not have been heard by Wordsworth at Coleorton in 1806, as he did not go south to Leicestershire till November of that year.

The poem was placed by him amongst those of the Imagination.—Ed.

## TO LADY BEAUMONT.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1807.

[The winter garden of Coleorton, fashioned out of an old quarry, under the superintendence and direction of Mrs Wordsworth and my sister Dorothy, during the winter and spring we resided there.]

LADY! the songs of Spring were in the grove  
 While I was shaping beds for winter flowers;<sup>1</sup>  
 While I was planting green unfading bowers,  
 And shrubs—to hang upon the warm alcove,  
 And sheltering wall; and still, as Fancy wove  
 The dream, to time and nature's blended powers  
 I gave this paradise for winter hours,  
 A labyrinth, Lady! which your feet shall rove.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

While I was framing beds of winter flowers,

1807.

Yes! when the sun of life more feebly shines,  
 Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn gloom  
 Or of high gladness you shall hither bring;  
 And these perennial bowers and murmuring pines  
 Be gracious as the music and the bloom  
 And all the mighty ravishment of spring.

This winter garden, fashioned by the Wordsworths out of the old quarry at Coleorton, during Sir George and Lady Beaumont's absence in 1807, exists very much as it was at the beginning of the century. The "perennial bowers and murmuring pines" may still be seen, little altered since 1807. The late Sir George Beaumont (whose grandfather was first-cousin to the artist Sir George, Wordsworth's friend), with strong reverence for the past, and for the traditions of literary men which have made the district famous since the days of his ancestor Beaumont the dramatist, and especially for the memorials of Wordsworth's ten months' residence at Coleorton,—took a pleasure in preserving these memorials, very much as they were when he entered in possession of the estates of his ancestors. Such a reverence for the past is not only consistent with the "improvement" of an estate, and its belongings; it is a part of it. Wordsworth, and his wife and sister, were adepts in the laying out of grounds. (See the reference to the poet's joint labour with Wilkinson at Emont, Vol. III. p. 26.) It was the Wordsworths also, I believe, who designed the grounds of Fox How—Dr Arnold's residence, near Ambleside. Similar memorials of the poet survive at Hallsteads, Ullswater. The following is an extract from a letter of Dorothy Wordsworth to Lady Beaumont, written at Coleorton, and which has the postmark of February 18, 1807. "For more than a week we have had the most delightful weather. If William had but waited a few days, it would have been no anticipation when he said to you, 'the songs of Spring were in the grove;' for all this week the birds have chanted from morn till evening, larks, blackbirds, thrushes, and far more than I can name, and the busy rooks have joined their happy voices."

Wordsworth, writing to Sir George Beaumont, November 16, 1811, says, "I remember, Mr Bowles, the poet, objected to the word 'ravishment' at the end of the sonnet to the winter-garden; yet it has the authority of all the first-rate poets, for instance, Milton:

'In whose sight all things joy, *with ravishment*,  
 Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze . . . "

—ED.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1807.

——“Gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.”

[Written at Coleorton. This old man's name was Mitchell. He was, in all his ways and conversation, a great curiosity, both individually and as a representative of past times. His chief employment was keeping watch at night by pacing round the house, at that time building, to keep off depredators. He has often told me gravely of having seen the Seven Whistlers, and the Hounds as here described. Among the groves of Coleorton, where I became familiar with the habits and notions of old Mitchell, there was also a labourer of whom, I regret, I had no personal knowledge ; for, more than forty years after, when he was become an old man, I learned that while I was composing verses, which I usually did aloud, he took much pleasure, unknown to me, in following my steps that he might catch the words I uttered ; and, what is not a little remarkable, several lines caught in this way kept their place in his memory. My volumes have lately been given to him by my informant, and surely he must have been gratified to meet in print his old acquaintances.]

THOUGH narrow be that old Man's cares, and near,  
The poor old Man is greater than he seems :  
For he hath waking empire, wide as dreams ;  
An ample sovereignty of eye and ear.  
Rich are his walks with supernatural cheer ;  
The region of his inner spirit teems  
With vital sounds and monitory gleams  
Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.  
He the seven birds hath seen, that never part,  
Seen the SEVEN WHISTLERS in their nightly rounds,\*  
And counted them : and oftentimes will start—  
For overhead are sweeping GABRIEL'S HOUNDS  
Doomed, with their impious Lord, the flying Hart  
To chase for ever, on aërial grounds !

---

\* *Seen the Seven Whistlers, &c.* Both these superstitions are prevalent in the Midland Counties of England : that of Gabriel's Hounds appears to be very general over Europe ; being the same as the one upon which the German poet, Burger, has founded his ballad of the Wild Huntsman. 1807.

To bring all the poems referring to Coleorton together, so far as possible, this and the next sonnet are transferred from their places in the chronological list, and placed beside the Coleorton *Inscriptions*.

I am indebted to Mr William Kelly of Leicester for the following note on the Leicestershire Superstition of the Seven Whistlers.

"There is an old superstition, which it is not easy to get to the bottom of, concerning a certain cry or sound heard in the night, supposed to be produced by the Seven Whistlers. What or who those whistlers are is an unsolved problem. In some districts they are popularly believed to be witches, in others ghosts, in others devils, while in the Midland Counties they are supposed to be birds, either plovers or martins—some say swifts. In Leicestershire it is deemed a bad omen to hear the Seven Whistlers, and our old writers supply many passages illustrative of the popular credulity. Spenser, in his *Faerie Queene*, II. 12, § 36, speaks of

‘The whistlers shrill, that who hears doth die.’

Sir Walter Scott, in *The Lady of the Lake*, names the bird with which his character associated the cry—

‘And in the plover’s shrilly strain  
The signal whistlers heard again.’

"When the colliers of Leicestershire are flush of money, we are told, and indulge in a drinking bout, they sometimes hear the warning voice of the Seven Whistlers, get sobered and frightened, and will not descend the pit again till next day. Wordsworth speaks of a countryman who

‘The seven birds hath seen, that never part,  
Seen the Seven Whistlers in their nightly rounds,  
And counted them.’

"A few years ago, during a thunderstorm which passed over Leicestershire, and while vivid lightning was darting through the sky, immense flocks of birds were seen flying about, uttering doleful, affrighted cries as they passed, and keeping up for a long time a continual whistling like that made by some kinds of sea-birds. The number must have been immense, for the local newspapers mentioned the same phenomenon in different parts of the neighbouring counties of Northampton, Leicester, and Lincoln. A gentleman, conversing with a countryman on the following day, asked him what kind of birds he supposed them to have been. The man answered, ‘They are what we call the Seven Whistlers,’ and added that ‘whenever they are heard it is considered a sign of some great calamity, and that the last time he had heard them was on the night before the deplorable explosion of fire damp at the Hartley Colliery.’”

In *Notes and Queries* there are several allusions to this local super-



stition. In the Fifth Series (Vol. II., p. 264), Oct. 3, 1874, the Editor gives a summary of several notes on the subject in Vol. VIII. of the Fourth Series (pp. 68, 134, 196, and 268), with additional information. He says "record was made of their having been heard in Leicestershire; and that the develin or martin, the swift, and the plover were probably of the whistling fraternity that frightened men. At p. 134 it was shewn that Wordsworth had spoken of one who

‘ . . . the seven birds hath seen, that never part,  
Seen the Seven Whistlers in their nightly rounds,  
And counted them.’

On the same page, the swift is said to be the true whistler (but, as noted at page 196, the swifts never make nightly rounds), and the superstition is said to be common in our Midland Counties. At page 268, Mr Pearson put on record that in Lancashire the plovers, whistling as they fly, are accounted heralds of ill, though sometimes of trivial accident, and that they are there called ‘Wandering Jews,’ and are said to be, or to carry with them, the ever-restless souls of those Jews who assisted at the Crucifixion. At page 336, the whistlers are chronicled as having been the harbingers of the great Hartley Colliery explosion. A correspondent, VIATOR, added, that on the Bosphorus there are flocks of birds, the size of a thrush, which fly up and down the channel, and are never seen to rest on land or water. The men who rowed *Viator’s* caique told him that they were the souls of the damned, condemned to perpetual motion. The Seven Whistlers have not furnished chroniclers with later circumstances of their tuneless and awful progress till a week or two ago. . . . The whistlers are also heard and feared in Portugal. See *The New Quarterly* for July 1874, for a record of some travelling experience in that country.”

Another extract is to the following effect :—

“‘Your Excellency laughs at ghosts. But there is no lie about the Seven Whistlers. Many a man besides me has heard them.’

“‘Who are the Seven Whistlers? and have you seen them yourself?’

“‘Not seen, thank Heaven; but I have heard them plenty of times. Some say they are the ghosts of children unbaptized, who are to know no rest till the judgment day. Once last winter I was going with donkeys and a mule to Caia. Just at the moment I stopped by the river bank to tighten the mule’s girth, I heard the accursed whistlers coming down the wind along the river. I buried my head under the mule, and never moved till the danger was over; but they passed very near, for I heard the flap and rustle of their wings.’

“‘What was the danger?’

“‘If a man once sees them, heaven only knows what will not happen to him—death and damnation at the very least.’

“‘I have seen them many times. I shot, or tried to shoot them!’

“Holy Mother of God! you English are an awful people! You shot the Seven Whistlers?”

“Yes; we call them marecos (teal or widgeon) in our country, and shoot them whenever we can. They are better to eat than wild ducks.”

*Gabriel's Hounds.*—“At Wednesbury in Staffordshire, the colliers going to their pits early in the morning hear the noise of a pack of hounds in the air, to which they give the name of Gabriel's Hounds, though the more sober and judicious take them only to be wild geese making this noise in their flight.” Kennet MS., Lansd. 1033. (See Halliwell's *Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*, Vol. I. p. 388). The peculiar cry or cackle, both of the Brent Goose and of the Bean or Harvest Goose (*Anser Segetum*), has often been likened to that of a pack of hounds in full cry—especially when the birds are on the wing during night. For some account of the superstition of “Gabriel's Hounds,” see *Notes and Queries*, First Series, Vol. V. pp. 534 and 596; and Vol. XII. p. 470; Second Series, Vol. I. p. 80; and Fourth Series, Vol. VII. p. 299. In the last note these hounds are said to be popularly believed to be “the souls of unbaptised children wandering in the air till the day of judgment.” They are also explained as “a thing in the air, that is said in these parts (Sheffield) to foretell calamity, sounding like a great pack of beagles in full cry.” This quotation is from Charles Reade's *Put yourself in his place*, which contains many scraps of local folk-lore. The following is from the *Statistical History of Kirkmichael*, by the Rev. John Grant. “In the autumnal season, when the moon shines from a serene sky, often is the wayfaring traveller arrested by the music of the hills. Often struck with a more sober scene, he beholds the visionary hunters engaged in the chase, and pursuing the deer of the clouds, while the hollow rocks in long sounding echoes reverberate their cries.” “There are several now living who assert that they have seen and heard this aerial hunting.” See the *Statistical History of Scotland*, edited by Sir J. Sinclair, Vol. XII. p. 461-2.—ED.

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE SEAT OF SIR  
GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., LEICESTERSHIRE.

Comp. 1808. — Pub. 1815.

[In the grounds of Coleorton these verses are engraved on a stone placed near the Tree, which was thriving and spreading when I saw it in the summer of 1841.]

THE embowering rose, the acacia, and the pine  
Will not unwillingly their place resign;

If but the Cedar thrive that near them stands,  
 Planted by Beaumont's and by Wordsworth's hands.  
 One wooed the silent Art with studious pains :  
 These groves have heard the Other's pensive strains ;  
 Devoted thus, their spirits did unite  
 By interchange of knowledge and delight.  
 May Nature's kindest powers sustain the Tree,  
 And Love protect it from all injury !  
 And when its potent branches, wide out-thrown,  
 Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,<sup>1</sup>  
 Here may some Painter sit in future days,  
 Some future Poet meditate his lays ;  
 Not mindless of that distant age renowned  
 When Inspiration hovered o'er this ground,  
 The haunt of him who sang how spear and shield  
 In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field ;  
 And of that famous Youth, full soon removed  
 From earth, perhaps by Shakspeare's self approved,  
 Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend beloved.

About twelve years after the last visit of Wordsworth to Coleorton, referred to in the Fenwick note—of which the date should, I think, be 1842, not 1841—this cedar tree fell, uprooted during a storm. It was, however, as the Coleorton gardener then on the estate tells me, replanted with much labour, and protected with care ; although the top branches being injured, it was never quite the same as it had been. During the night of the great storm on the 13th October 1880, however, it fell a second time, and perished irretrievably. The memorial stone remains, injured a good deal by the wear and tear of time ; and the inscription is more than half obliterated. It is in a situation much more exposed to the elements than the other two inscriptions at Coleorton. He

" who sang how spear and shield  
 In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field,"

was Sir John Beaumont, the brother of the dramatist, who wrote a

<sup>1</sup> In edd. 1815 and 1820 the following lines follow " memorial Stone,"  
 And to a favourite resting-place invite,  
 For coolness grateful and a sober light ;

poem on the battle of Bosworth. (See one of Wordsworth's notes to the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*.) The

famous Youth, full soon removed

From earth,

was George Beaumont, the dramatist, who wrote in conjunction with Fletcher. He died at the age of twenty-nine.

In an undated letter addressed to Sir George Beaumont, Wordsworth wrote, "I like your ancestor's verses the more, the more I see of them. They are manly, dignified, and extremely harmonious. I do not remember in any author of that age such a series of well-tuned couplets."

In another letter written from Grasmere (probably in 1811) to Sir George, he says in reference to his own poems, "These inscriptions have all one fault, they are too long; but I was unable to do justice to the thoughts in less room. The second has brought Sir John Beaumont and his brother Francis so lively to my mind that I recur to the plan of republishing the former's poems, perhaps in connection with those of Francis."

On November 16, 1811, he wrote to him again, "I am glad that the inscriptions please you. It did always appear to me, that inscriptions, particularly those in verse, or in a dead language, were never supposed *necessarily* to be the composition of those in whose name they appeared. If a more striking or more dramatic effect could be produced, I have always thought, that in an epitaph or memorial of any kind, a father or husband, &c., might be introduced, speaking without any absolute deception being intended; that is, the reader is understood to be at liberty to say to himself,—these verses, or this Latin, may be the composition of some unknown person, and not that of the father, widow, or friend, from whose hand or voice they profess to proceed. . . . I have altered the verses, and I have only to regret that the alteration is not more happily done. But I never found anything more difficult. I wished to preserve this expression *patrimonial grounds*, but I found this impossible, on account of the awkwardness of the pronouns, he and his, as applied to Reynolds, and to yourself. This, even when it does not produce confusion, is always inelegant. I was, therefore, obliged to drop it; so that we must be content, I fear, with the inscription as it stands below. I hope it will do. I tried a hundred different ways, but cannot hit upon anything better. . . ."—Ed.

## IN A GARDEN OF THE SAME.

Comp. 1811. — Pub. 1815.

[This Niche is in the sandstone-rock in the winter-garden at Coleorton, which garden, as has been elsewhere said, was made under our direc-

tion out of an old unsightly quarry. While the labourers were at work, Mrs Wordsworth, my sister and I used to amuse ourselves occasionally in scooping this seat out of the soft stone. It is of the size, with something of the appearance, of a stall in a Cathedral. This inscription is not engraven, as the former, and the two following are, in the grounds.]

OFT is the medal faithful to its trust  
 When temples, columns, towers, are laid in dust;  
 And 'tis a common ordinance of fate  
 That things obscure and small outlive the great:  
 Hence, when yon mansion and the flowery trim  
 Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,  
 And all its stately trees, are passed away,  
 This little Niche, unconscious of decay,  
 Perchance may still survive. And be it known  
 That it was scooped within the living stone,—  
 Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains  
 Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,  
 But by an industry that wrought in love;  
 With help from female hands, that proudly strove  
 To aid the work,<sup>1</sup> what time these walks and bowers  
 Were shaped to cheer dark winter's lonely hours.

This niche is still to be seen although not quite "unconscious of decay." The growth of yew-trees, over and around it, has darkened the seat; and constant damp has decayed the soft stone. The niche having been scooped out by Mrs Wordsworth and Dorothy, as well as by Wordsworth, suggests the cutting of the inscriptions on the Rock of Names in 1800, in which they all took part. (See Vol. III. pp. 115, 116.) On his return to Grasmere from Coleorton, Wordsworth wrote thus to Sir George Beaumont about this inscription. The extract in a continuation of the letter quoted in the note to the previous poem. "What follows I composed yesterday morning, thinking there might be no impropriety in placing it so as to be visible only to a person sitting within the niche, which is hollowed out of the sandstone in the winter-garden. I am told that this is, in the present form of the niche, impossible; but I shall be most ready, when I come to Coleorton, to scoop out a place for it, if Lady Beaumont think it worth while."

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

To shape the work, what time	.	.	.	
Were framed to cheer	.	.	.	1815.

Then follows the—

INSCRIPTION.

“Oft is the medal faithful to its trust.”

On Nov. 16, 1811, writing again to Sir George on this subject of the *Inscriptions*, and evidently referring to this one on the “niche,” he says, “As to the ‘Female,’ and ‘Male,’ I know not how to get rid of it ; for that circumstance gives the recess an appropriate interest. . . . . On this account, the lines had better be suppressed, for it is not improbable that the altering of them might cost me more trouble than writing a hundred fresh ones.”—ED.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., AND IN HIS NAME, FOR AN URN, PLACED BY HIM AT THE TERMINATION OF A NEWLY-PLANTED AVENUE, IN THE SAME GROUNDS.

Comp. 1808. — Pub. 1815.

YE Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed Urn,  
Shoot forth with lively power at Spring's return ;  
And be not slow a stately growth to rear  
Of pillars, branching off from year to year,  
Till they have learned to frame a darksome aisle ;  
That may recal to mind that awful Pile<sup>1</sup>  
Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's noblest dead,  
In the last sanctity of fame is laid.  
—There, though by right the excelling Painter sleep  
Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath keep,  
Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear  
Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's private tear :  
Hence, on my patrimonial grounds, have I  
Raised this frail tribute to his memory :

<sup>1</sup> 1820.

Till ye have framed, at length, a darksome aisle,  
Like a recess within that sacred pile.

MS. letter to Sir George Beaumont, 1811.

Till they at length have framed a darksome Aisle  
Like a recess within that awful Pile,

1815.

From youth a zealous follower of the Art  
 That he professed ; attached to him in heart ;  
 Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride  
 Feeling what England lost when Reynolds died.

These Lime-trees now form "a stately growth of pillars," "a darksome aisle;" and the urn remains, as set up in 1807, at the end of the avenue. The awful Pile where Reynolds lies, and where—

Death and Glory a joint Sabbath keep,  
 is, of course, Westminster Abbey.

After Wordsworth's return from Coleorton and Stockton to Grasmere, he wrote thus to Sir George Beaumont :—

"MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

"Had there been room at the end of the small avenue of lime-trees for planting a spacious circle of the same trees, the urn might have been placed in the centre, with the inscription thus altered,

"Ye lime-trees ranged around this hallowed urn,  
 Shoot forth with lively power at spring's return !

Here may some Painter sit in future days,  
 Some future poet meditate his lays !  
 Not mindless of that distant age, renowned,  
 When inspiration hovered o'er this ground,  
 The haunt of him who sang, how spear and shield  
 In civic conflict met on Bosworth field,  
 And if that famous youth (full soon removed  
 From earth !) by mighty Shakespear's self approved,  
 Fletcher's associate, Jonson's friend below.

"The first couplet of the above, as it before stood, would have appeared ludicrous, if the stone had remained after the trees might have been gone. The couplet relating to the household virtues did not accord with the painter and the poet ; the former being allegorical figures ; the latter, living men."

This letter—which is not now in the Beaumont Collection at Coleorton Hall—seems to imply that Wordsworth thought of combining the first couplet on the Urn with the last nine lines of the inscription for the stone behind the Cedar tree. But this was never carried out. The inscriptions were carved at Coleorton, as they are printed in the text.—ED.

## FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON.

Comp. 1811. — Pub. 1815.

BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,  
 Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest ground  
 Stand yet, but, Stranger! hidden from thy view,  
 The ivied Ruins of forlorn GRACE DIEU;  
 Erst a religious House, which day and night  
 With hymns resounded, and the chanted rite:  
 And when those rites had ceased, the Spot gave birth  
 To honourable Men of various worth:  
 There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,  
 Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager child;  
 There, under shadow of the neighbouring rocks,  
 Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks;  
 Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,  
 Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy dreams  
 Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,  
 With which his genius shook the buskined stage.  
 Communities are lost, and Empires die,  
 And things of holy use unhallowed lie;  
 They perish;—but the Intellect can raise,  
 From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er decays.

In editions 1815 and 1820, Wordsworth appended the following line from Daniel, as a note to the third last line of this "inscription"—

Strait all that holy was unhallowed lies.

*Daniel.*

Charnwood forest, in Leicestershire, is an almost treeless wold of between fifteen and sixteen thousand acres. The

Eastern ridge, the craggy bound,  
 Rugged and high,

refers probably to High Cadmon. The nunnery of Gracedieu was a religious house, in a retired spot near the centre of the forest; and was built between 1236 and 1242. The English monasteries were sup-



pressed in 1536; but Grace Dieu, with thirty others of the smaller monasteries, was allowed to continue some time longer. It was finally suppressed in 1539, when the site of the priory, with the demesne lands, were granted to Sir Humphrey Foster, who conveyed the whole to John Beaumont. Francis Beaumont, the dramatic poet, was born at Gracedieu in 1586. He died in 1615, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

"William and I went to Grace Dieu last week. We were enchanted with the little valley and its nooks, and the Rocks of Charnwood upon the hill."—Dorothy Wordsworth to Lady Beaumont, November 17, 1806.

This inscription was composed at Grasmere, November 19, 1811, as the following extract from a letter of Wordsworth's to Lady Beaumont indicates:—"Grasmere, Wednesday, November 20, 1811.—My Dear Lady Beaumont—When you see this you will think I mean to overrun you with inscriptions. I do not mean to tax you with putting them up, only with reading them. The following I composed yesterday morning in a walk from Brathway, whither I had been to accompany my sister:—

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON.

Beneath yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,  
&c., &c.

The thought of writing this inscription occurred to me many years ago."—ED.

## SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE,

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD, THE SHEPHERD, TO THE  
ESTATES AND HONOURS OF HIS ANCESTORS.

Comp. 1807. ——— Pub. 1807.

[See the note. This poem was composed of Coleorton while I was walking to and fro along the path that led from Sir George Beaumont's Farmhouse, where we resided, to the Hall, which was building at that time.]

HIGH in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,  
And Emont's murmur mingled with the Song.—  
The words of ancient time I thus translate,  
A festal strain that hath been silent long:—

“From town to town, from tower to tower,  
The red rose is a gladsome flower.  
Her thirty years of winter past,  
The red rose is revived at last ;  
She lifts her head for endless spring,  
For everlasting blossoming :  
Both roses flourish, red and white :  
In love and sisterly delight  
The two that were at strife are blended,  
And all old troubles now are ended.—  
Joy ! joy to both ! but most to her  
Who is the flower of Lancaster !  
Behold her how She smiles to-day  
On this great throng, this bright array !  
Fair greeting doth she send to all  
From every corner of the hall ;  
But chiefly from above the board  
Where sits in state our rightful Lord,  
A Clifford to his own restored !

They came with banner, spear, and shield ;  
And it was proved in Bosworth-field.  
Not long the Avenger was withstood—  
Earth helped him with the cry of blood :\*  
St George was for us, and the might  
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.  
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,  
We loudest in the faithful north :  
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,  
Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;

---

\* This line is from the *Battle of Bosworth Field*, by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the dramatist), whose poems are written with much spirit, elegance, and harmony, and have deservedly been reprinted lately in Chalmers' *Collection of English Poets*. 1807.

Our strong abodes and castles see  
The glory of their loyalty.<sup>1</sup>

How glad is Skipton at this hour—  
Though lonely, a deserted Tower;<sup>2</sup>  
Knight, squire, and yeoman, page, and groom:<sup>3</sup>  
We have them at the feast of Brough'm.  
How glad Pendragon—though the sleep  
Of years be on her!—She shall reap  
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing  
As in a dream her own renewing.  
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem  
Beside her little humble stream;  
And she that keepeth watch and ward  
Her statelier Eden's course to guard;  
They both are happy at this hour,  
Though each is but a lonely Tower:—  
But here is perfect joy and pride  
For one fair House by Emont's side,  
This day, distinguished without peer  
To see her Master and to cheer—  
Him, and his Lady-mother dear!

Oh! it was a time forlorn  
When the fatherless was born—  
Give her wings that she may fly,  
Or she sees her infant die!

<sup>1</sup> 1807. . . . their royalty. 1815.  
1820 returns to text of 1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1845. Though she is but a lonely tower.  
Silent, deserted of her best  
Without an Inmate or a Guest. 1807.  
To vacancy and silence left  
Of all her guardian sons bereft. 1820.

<sup>3</sup> 1836. Knight, Squire, Yeoman, Page or Groom. 1807.

Swords that are with slaughter wild  
Hunt the Mother and the Child.  
Who will take them from the light ?  
—Yonder is a man in sight—  
Yonder is a house—but where ?  
No, they must not enter there.  
To the caves, and to the brooks,  
To the clouds of heaven she looks :  
She is speechless, but her eyes  
Pray in ghostly agonies.  
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,  
Maid and Mother undefiled,  
Save a Mother and her Child !

Now Who is he that bounds with joy  
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy ?  
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass  
Light as the wind along the grass.  
Can this be He who hither came  
In secret, like a smothered flame ?  
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed  
For shelter, and a poor man's bread !  
God loves the Child ; and God hath willed  
That those dear words should be fulfilled,  
The Lady's words, when forced away,  
The last she to her Babe did say :  
' My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest  
I may not be ; but rest thee, rest,  
For lowly shepherd's life is best !'

Alas ! when evil men are strong  
No life is good, no pleasure long.  
The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,  
And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,

And quit the flowers that summer brings  
 To Glenderamakin's lofty springs ;  
 Must vanish, and his careless cheer  
 Be turned to heaviness and fear.  
 —Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise !  
 Hear it, good man, old in days !  
 Thou tree of covert and of rest  
 For this young Bird that is distress ;  
 Among thy branches safe he lay,  
 And he was free to sport and play,  
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant harp, that sings of fear  
 And heaviness in Clifford's ear !  
 I said, when evil men are strong,  
 No life is good, no pleasure long,  
 A weak and cowardly untruth !  
 Our Clifford was a happy Youth,  
 And thankful through a weary time,  
 That brought him up to manhood's prime.  
 —Again he wanders forth at will,  
 And tends a flock from hill to hill :  
 His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen  
 Such garb with such a noble mien ;  
 Among the shepherd grooms no mate  
 Hath he, a Child of strength and state !  
 Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,<sup>1</sup>  
 Nor yet for higher sympathy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1845.

. . . . . for solemn glee.

1807.

<sup>2</sup> 1845.

And a cheerful company,  
 That learned of him submissive ways ;  
 And comforted his private days.

1807.

A spirit soothing company  
 That learned, &c. . . . .

1836.

To his side the fallow-deer  
 Came and rested without fear ;  
 The eagle, lord of land and sea,  
 Stooped down to pay him fealty ;  
 And both the undying fish that swim  
 Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him ; \*  
 The pair were servants of his eye  
 In their immortality ;  
 And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,  
 Moved to and fro, for his delight. <sup>1</sup>  
 He knew the rocks which Angels haunt  
 Upon the mountains visitant ; <sup>2</sup>  
 He hath kenned them taking wing :  
 And into caves where Faeries sing <sup>3</sup>  
 He hath entered ; and been told  
 By Voices how men lived of old.  
 Among the heavens his eye can see  
 The face of thing that is to be ; <sup>4</sup>  
 And, if that men report him right,  
 His tongue could whisper words of might. <sup>5</sup>

- |                         |   |                             |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <sup>1</sup> 1836.      | They moved about in open sight,<br>To and fro, for his delight.   | 1807.                       |
| <sup>2</sup> 1836.      | On the mountains . . .  | 1807.                       |
| <sup>3</sup> 1836.      | And the Caves where Fairies sing  | 1807.                       |
| <sup>4</sup> 1836.      | Face of thing . . . . .   | 1807.                       |
| <sup>5</sup> C. & 1842. | And, if men report him right,<br>He can whisper words of might,<br>. . . . .<br>He could whisper . . . . .<br>And if that men report him right,<br>He could whisper . . . . . | 1807.<br><br>1827.<br>1836. |

\* It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal Fish, inhabitants of this Tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld.—Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddle-back. W. W., 1807.

—Now another day is come,  
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom;  
 He hath thrown aside his crook,  
 And hath buried deep his book;  
 Armour rusting in his halls  
 On the blood of Clifford calls;—\*  
 ‘Quell the Scot,’ exclaims the Lance—  
 Bear me to the heart of France,  
 Is the longing of the Shield—  
 Tell thy name, thou trembling Field;  
 Field of death, where’er thou be,  
 Groan thou with our victory!  
 Happy day, and mighty hour,  
 When our Shepherd, in his power,  
 Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,  
 To his ancestors restored  
 Like a re-appearing Star,  
 Like a glory from afar,  
 First shall head the flock of war!”  
 Alas! the impassioned minstrel did not know  
 How, by Heaven’s grace this Clifford’s heart was framed:  
 How he, long forced in humble walks to go,  
 Was softened into feeling, soothed and tamed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1845.

Alas! the fervent Harper did not know  
 That for a tranquil Soul the Lay was framed,  
 Who long compelled in humble walks to go,  
 Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed. 1807.

---

\* The martial character of the Cliffords is well known to the readers of English History; but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines and what follows, that, besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate Progenitors of the Person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken, all died in the Field. W. W., 1807.

Compare *The Borderers*, Vol. I. p. 155—

“They say Lord Clifford is a savage man.”

—Ed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;  
 His daily teachers had been woods and rills,  
 The silence that is in the starry sky,  
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race,  
 Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead :  
 Nor did he change ; but kept in lofty place  
 The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage-hearth ;  
 The Shepherd-lord was honoured more and more ;  
 And, ages after he was laid in earth,  
 "The good Lord Clifford " was the name he bore.

The original text of this *Song* was altered but little in succeeding editions, and was not changed at all till 1836 and 1845. It was always ranked amongst the "Poems of the Imagination." The following is Wordsworth's Explanatory Note, appended to the poem in all the editions :—

"Henry Lord Clifford, &c., &c., who is the subject of this Poem, was the son of John Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field,\* which John Lord Clifford, as is known to the Reader of English History, was the person who after the battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York who had fallen in the battle, 'in part of revenge' (say the Authors of the History of Cumberland and Westmoreland); 'for the Earl's Father had slain his.' A deed which worthily blemished the author (says Speed); But who, as he adds, 'dare promise any thing temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing; for so one maketh this Lord to speak.' This, no doubt, I would observe by the by, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented; 'for the Earl was no Child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this (say the Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke, who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the illustrious name to which she was born); that he was the

---

\* He was killed at Ferrybridge the day before the battle of Towton.  
 —ED.



next Child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard Duke of York, and that King was then eighteen years of age : and for the small distance betwixt her Children, see Austin Vincent in his book of Nobility, page 622, where he writes of them all. It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only twenty-five years of age, had been a leading Man and Commander, two or three years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time ; and, therefore, would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be entitled to mercy from his youth.—But, independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the Family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the House of York : so that after the Battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of the Poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years ; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his Father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, ‘when called to parliament, he behaved nobly and wisely ; but otherwise came seldom to London or the Court ; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his Castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles.’ Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn ; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that, in the course of his shepherd life, he had acquired great astronomical knowledge. I cannot conclude this note without adding a word upon the subject of those numerous and noble feudal Edifices, spoken of in the Poem, the ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great an ornament to that interesting country. The Cliffords had always been distinguished for an honourable pride in these Castles ; and we have seen that after the wars of York and Lancaster they were rebuilt ; in the civil Wars of Charles the First, they were again laid waste, and again restored almost to their former magnificence by the celebrated Lady Ann Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, &c., &c. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, when the Estates of Clifford had passed into the Family of Tufton, three of these Castles, namely Brough, Brougham, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when this order was issued, the Earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, 58th Chap. 12th Verse, to which the inscription placed over the gate of Pendragon Castle, by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his Grandmother) at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader. *‘And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places ; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.’* The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the Estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and

a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations."

Compare the reference to the "Shepherd Lord," in the first canto of *The White Doe of Rylstone*, and the topographical allusions there, with this *Song*.

*High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,  
And Emont's murmur mingled with the song.*

Brougham Castle, past which the river Emont flows, is about two miles out of Penrith, on the Appleby Road. It is now a ruin, but was once a place of importance. The larger part of it was built by Roger, Lord Clifford, son of Isabella de Veteripont, who placed over the inner door the inscription, "This made Roger." His grandson added the eastern part. The castle was frequently laid waste by the Scottish Bands, and during the Wars of the Roses. The Earl of Cumberland entertained James I. within it, in 1617, on the occasion of the king's last return from Scotland; but it seems to have "layen ruinous" from that date, and to have suffered much during the civil wars in the reign of Charles I. In 1651-52 it was repaired by Lady Anne Clifford, Countess Dowager of Pembroke, who wrote thus—"After I had been there myself to direct the building of it, did I cause my old decayed castle of Brougham to be repaired, and also the tower called the *Roman Tower*, in the same old castle, and the court-house, for keeping my courts in, with some dozen or fourteen rooms to be built in it upon the old foundation." (*Pembroke Memoirs*, I. p. 216.) After the time of the Countess Anne, the castle was neglected, and much of the stone, timber, and lead disposed of at public sales: the wainscoting being purchased by the neighbouring villagers.

*Her thirty years of winter past,  
The red rose is revived at last.*

This refers to the thirty years interval between 1455 (the first battle of St Albans in the wars of the Roses) and 1485 (the battle of Bosworth and the accession of Henry VII.)

*Both roses flourish, red and white,*

Alluding to the marriage of Henry VII. with Elizabeth, which united the two warring lines of York and Lancaster.

*And it was found at Bosworth-field.*

The Battle of Bosworth Field, in Leicestershire, was fought in 1485.

*Not long the Avenger was withstood—  
Earth helped him with the cry of blood.*

Henry VII.—who, as Henry, Earl of Richmond, last scion of the line

of Lancaster, had fled to Brittany—returned with Morton, the exiled Bishop of Ely, landed at Milford, advanced through Wales, and met the royal army at Bosworth, where Richard was slain, and Henry crowned king on the battlefield. The “cry of blood” refers, doubtless, to the murder of the young princes in the Tower.

*How glad is Skipton at this hour,  
Though lonely, a deserted Tower.*

Skipton is the “capital” of the Craven district of Yorkshire, as Barrow is the capital of the Furness district of Lancashire and Westmoreland. The castle of Skipton was the chief residence of the Cliffords. Architecturally it is of two periods: the round tower dating from the reign of Edward II., and the rest from that of Henry VIII. From the time of Robert de Clifford, who fell at Bannockburn (1314), until the seventeenth century, the estates of the Cliffords extended from Skipton to Brougham Castle—seventy miles—with only a short interruption of ten miles. The “Shepherd Lord” Clifford of this poem was attainted—as explained in Wordsworth’s note—by the triumphant House of York. He was “committed by his mother to the care of certain shepherds, whose wives had served her,” and who kept him concealed both in Cumberland, and at Londesborough, in Yorkshire, where his mother’s (Lady Margaret Vesci) own estates lay. The old “Tower” of Skipton Castle was “deserted” during these years when the “Shepherd Lord” was concealed in Cumberland.

*How glad Pendragon—though the sleep  
Of years be on her!*

Pendragon Castle, in a narrow dell in the forest of Mallerstang, near the source of the Eden, south of Kirkby-Stephen, was another of the castles of the Cliffords. Its building was traditionally ascribed to Uter Pendragon, of Stonehenge celebrity, who was fabled to have tried to make the Eden flow round the castle of Pendragon: hence the distich—

Let Uter Pendragon do what he can,  
Eden will run where Eden ran.

In the Countess of Pembroke’s *Memoirs* (Vol. I. pp. 22, 228), we are told that Idonea de Veteripont “made a great part of her residence in Westmoreland at Brough Castle, near Stanemore, and at Pendragon Castle, in Mallerstang.” The castle was burned and destroyed by Scottish raiders in 1341, and for 140 years it was in a ruinous state. It is probably to this that reference is made in the phrase, “Though the sleep of years be on her.” During the attainder of Henry Lord Clifford, in the reign of Edward IV., part of this estate of Mallerstang was granted to Sir William Parr of Kendal Castle. It was again destroyed during the civil wars of the Stewarts, and was restored,

along with Skipton and Brougham, by Lady Anne Clifford, in 1660, who put up an inscription “. . . Repaired in 1660, so as she came to lye in it herself for a little while in October 1661, after it had lain ruinous without timber or any other covering since 1541. Isaiah, cap. lviii. ver. 12.” It was again demolished in 1685.

*Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem  
Beside her little humble stream.*

Brough—the Verterae of the Romans—is called, for distinction sake, *Brough-under-Stanmore* (or *Stanemore*). The “little humble stream” is Hillbeck, formerly *Hellebeck*—(it was said to derive its name from the waters rushing or *helleing* down the chaunel)—which descends from Warcop Fell, runs through Market Brough, and joins the Eden below it. The date of the building of the castle of Brough is uncertain, but it is probably older than the Conquest. It was sacked by the Scottish King William in 1174. It was “one of the chief residences” of Idonea de Veteripont (referred to in the previous note); for “then it was in its prime” (*Pemb. Mem.*, Vol. I. p. 22). Probably she rebuilt it, and changed it from a tower—like Pendragon—into a castle. In the *Pembroke Memoirs* (I. p. 108), we read of its subsequent destruction by fire. “A great misfortune befell Henry Lord Clifford, some two years before his death, which happened in 1521; his ancient and great castle of Brough-under-Stanemore was set on fire by a casual mischance, a little after he had kept a great Christmas there, so as all the timber and lead were utterly consumed, and nothing left but the bare walls, which since are more and more consumed, and quite ruined.” This same Countess Anne Pembroke began to repair it in April 1660, “at her exceeding great charge and cost.” She put up an inscription over the gate similar to the one which she inscribed at Pendragon.

*And she that keepeth watch and ward  
Her statelier Eden's course to guard.*

Doubtless Appleby Castle. Its origin is equally uncertain. Before 1422, John, Lord Clifford, “buildded that strong and fine artificial gatehouse, all arched with stone, and decorated with the arms of the Veteriponts, Cliffords, and Percys, which with several parts of the castle walls was defaced and broken down in the civil war of 1648.” His successor, Thomas, Lord Clifford, “built the chiefest part of the castle towards the east, as the hall, the chapel, and the great chamber.” This was in 1454. The Countess Anne Pembroke wrote of Appleby Castle thus (*Pemb. MSS.*, Vol. I., p. 187): “In 1651 I continued to live in Appleby Castle a whole year, and spent much time in repairing it and Brougham Castle, to make them as habitable as I could, though Brougham was very ruinous, and much out of repair. And in this year, the 21st of April, I helped to lay the foundation stone of the middle wall of the great tower of Appleby Castle, called *Cæsar's Tower*,

to the end it might be repaired again, and made habitable, if it pleased God (Is. lvi. 12), after it had stood without a roof or covering, or one chamber habitable in it, since about 1567," &c., &c.

*One fair House by Emont's side,*  
Brougham Castle.

*Him, and his Lady-mother dear,*  
Lady Margaret, daughter and heiress of Lord Vesci, who married John, Lord Clifford—the Clifford of Shakespeare's *Henry VI.* He was killed at Ferrybridge near Knottingley in 1461. Their son was Henry, "the Shepherd Lord." His mother is buried in Londesborough Church, near Market Weighton.

*Now who is he that bounds with joy*  
*On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy?*

Carrock-fell, is three miles south-west from Castle Sowerby, in Cumberland.

*The boy must part from Mosedale's groves,*  
*And leave Blencathara's rugged coves.*

There are many *Mosedales* in the English Lake District. The one referred to here is to the north of Blencathara or Saddleback.

*And quit the flowers that summer brings*  
*To Glenderumakin's lofty springs.*

The river Glenderamakin rises in the lofty ground to the north of Blencathara.

*Give Sir Lancelot Thelkeld praise!*  
.  
.  
.  
*Thou tree of covert and of rest*  
*For this young Bird that is distressed.*

It was on Sir Lancelot Thelkeld's estates in Cumberland that the young Lord was concealed, disguised as a Shepherd-boy. He was the "tree of covert" for the young "Bird" Henry Clifford. Compare *The Waggoner* (Vol. III. p. 100).

And see, beyond that hamlet small,  
The ruined towers of Thelkeld Hall,  
Lurking in a double shade,  
By trees and lingering twilight made !  
There, at Blencathara's rugged feet,  
Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat  
To noble Clifford ; from annoy  
Concealed the persecuted boy,  
Well pleased in rustic garb to feed  
His flock, and pipe on shepherd's reed  
Among this multitude of hills,  
Craggs, woodlands, waterfalls, and rills.

The old hall of Thelkeld has long been a ruin. Its only habitable part has been a farmhouse for many years.

*And both the undying fish that swim  
Through Bowscale-Tarn did wait on him.*

Bowscale-Tarn is to the north of Blencathara. Its stream joins the Caldew river.

*And into caves where fairies sing  
He hath entered.*

Compare the previous reference to Blencathara's "rugged coves." There are many such on this mountain.

*Alas ! the impassioned minstrel did not know  
How, by Heaven's grace this Clifford's heart was framed :  
How he, long forced in humble walks to go,  
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.*

After restoration to his ancestral estates, the Shepherd Lord preferred to live in comparative retirement. He spent most of his time at Barden Tower (see notes to *The White Doe of Rylstone*), which he enlarged, and where he lived with a small retinue. He was much at Bolton (which was close at hand), and there he studied astronomy and alchemy, aided by the monks. It is to the time when he lived at Threlkeld, however—wandering as a shepherd-boy, over the ridges and around the coves of Blencathara, amongst the groves of Mosedale, and by the lofty springs of Glenderamakin—that Wordsworth refers in the lines,

*Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;  
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,  
The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.*

He was at Flodden in 1513, when nearly sixty years of age, leading there the "flower of Craven."

From Penigent to Pendle Hill,  
From Linton to long Addingham,  
And all that Craven's coasts did till,  
They with the lusty Clifford came.

Compare the first canto of *The White Doe of Rylstone*—

When he, with spear and shield,  
Rode, full of years, to Flodden field.

He died in 1523, and was buried in the choir of Bolton Priory.

The following is Sarah Coleridge's criticism of the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, in the editorial note to her father's *Biographia Literaria* (Vol. II., ch. ix., p. 152, ed. 1847):—

"The transitions and vicissitudes in this noble lyric I have always thought rendered it one of the finest specimens of modern subjective poetry which our age has seen. The ode commences in a tone of high

gratulation and festivity—a tone not only glad, but *comparatively* even jocund and light-hearted. The Clifford is restored to the home, the honours and estates of his ancestors. Then it sinks and falls away to the remembrance of tribulation—times of war and bloodshed, flight and terror, and hiding away from the enemy—times of poverty and distress, when the Clifford was brought, a little child, to the shelter of a northern valley. After a while it emerges from those depths of sorrow—gradually rises into a strain of elevated tranquillity and contemplative rapture; through the power of imagination, the beautiful and impressive aspects of nature are brought into relationship with the spirit of him, whose fortunes and character form the subject of the piece, and are represented as gladdening and exalting it, whilst they keep it *pure and unspotted from the world*. Suddenly the Poet is carried on with greater animation and passion: he has returned to the point whence he started—flung himself back into the tide of stirring life and moving events. All is to come over again, struggle and conflict, chances and changes of war, victory and triumph, overthrow and desolation. I know nothing, in lyric poetry, more beautiful or affecting than the final transition from this part of the ode, with its rapid metre, to the slow elegiac stanzas at the end, when, from the warlike fervour and eagerness, the jubilant strain which has just been described, the Poet passes back into the sublime silence of Nature, gathering amid her deep and quiet bosom a more subdued and solemn tenderness than he had manifested before; it is as if from the heights of the imaginative intellect, his spirit had retreated into the recesses of a profoundly thoughtful Christian heart.”

The *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle* was placed by Wordsworth amongst the “Poems of the Imagination.”—ED.

## 1808.

As the Coleorton poems are all transferred to the year 1807, and *The Force of Prayer* was also written in that year, those actually composed in 1808 were few in number. With the exception of *The White Doe*, which was added to, they include only the two sonnets “composed while the author was engaged in writing a tract, occasioned by the Convention of Cintra,” and the fragment on *George and Sarah Green*. The latter poem Wordsworth gave to De Quincey, who published it in his “Recollections of Grasmere,” which appeared in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, September 1839; but it never found a place in any edition of the poems.

The reasons which have led me to assign *The White Doe* to the year 1808, are stated in a note to the poem (see p. 191). I infer that it was

practically finished in April 1808, because Dorothy Wordsworth, in a letter to Lady Beaumont, dated April 20, 1808, says, "The poem is to be published. Longman has consented—in spite of the odium under which my brother labours as a poet—to give him 100 guineas for 1000 copies, according to his demand." She gives no indication of the name of the poem referred to. As it must, however, have been one which was to be published separately, she can only refer to *The White Doe* or to *The Excursion*; but the latter poem was not finished in 1808.

It is probable, from the remark made in a subsequent letter to Lady Beaumont, February 1810 (see p. 190), that Wordsworth intended either to add to what he had written in 1808, or to alter some passages before publication; or by "completing" the poem, he may mean simply adding the *Dedication*, which was not written till 1815.

All things considered, it seems the best arrangement that the poems of 1808 should begin with *The White Doe*, and end with the lines on *George and Sarah Green*.—ED.

## THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE;

OR, THE FATE OF THE NORTONS.

Comp. 1807-10. — Pub. 1815.

[The earlier half of this poem was composed at Stockton-upon-Tees, when Mrs Wordsworth and I were on a visit to her eldest brother, Mr Hutchinson, at the close of the year 1807. The country is flat, and the weather was rough. I was accustomed every day to walk to and fro under the shelter of a row of stacks, in a field at a small distance from the town, and there poured forth my verses aloud as freely as they would come. Mrs Wordsworth reminds me that her brother stood upon the punctilio of not sitting down to dinner till I joined the party; and it frequently happened that I did not make my appearance till too late, so that she was made uncomfortable. I here beg her pardon for this and similar transgressions during the whole course of our wedded life. To my beloved sister the same apology is due.

When, from the visit just mentioned, we returned to Town-end, Grasmere, I proceeded with the poem; and it may be worth while to note, as a caution to others who may cast their eye on these memoranda, that the skin having been rubbed off my heel by my wearing too tight a shoe, though I desisted from walking, I found that the irritation of the wounded part was kept up, by the act of composition, to a degree that made it necessary to give my constitution a holiday. A rapid cure was the consequence. Poetic excitement, when accompanied by protracted labour in composition, has throughout my life brought on



more or less bodily derangement. Nevertheless, I am at the close of my seventy-third year, in what may be called excellent health ; so that intellectual labour is not necessarily unfavourable to longevity. But perhaps I ought here to add that mine has been generally carried on out of doors.

Let me here say a few words of this poem in the way of criticism. The subject being taken from feudal times has led to its being compared to some of Walter Scott's poems that belong to the same age and state of society. The comparison is inconsiderate. Sir Walter pursued the customary and very natural course of conducting an action, presenting various turns of fortune, to some outstanding point on which the mind might rest as a termination or catastrophe. The course I have attempted to pursue is entirely different. Everything that is attempted by the principal personages in "The White Doe" fails, so far as its object is external and substantial. So far as it is moral and spiritual it succeeds. The heroine of the poem knows that her duty is not to interfere with the current of events, either to forward or delay them, but

To abide  
The shock, and finally secure  
O'er pain and grief a triumph pure.

This she does in obedience to her brother's injunction, as most suitable to a mind and character that, under previous trials, has been proved to accord with his. She achieves this not without aid from the communication with the inferior Creature, which often leads her thoughts to revolve upon the past with a tender and humanising influence that exalts rather than depresses her. The anticipated heatification, if I may so say, of her mind, and the apotheosis of the companion of her solitude, are the points at which the Poem aims, and constitute its legitimate catastrophe, far too spiritual a one for instant or widely-spread sympathy, but not, therefore, the less fitted to make a deep and permanent impression upon that class of minds who think and feel more independently, than the many do, of the surfaces of things and interests transitory, because belonging more to the outward and social forms of life than to its internal spirit. How insignificant a thing, for example, does personal prowess appear compared with the fortitude of patience and heroic martyrdom ; in other words, with struggles for the sake of principle, in preference to victory gloried in for its own sake.]

#### ADVERTISEMENT.

DURING the Summer of 1807, I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory, in Yorkshire ; and the Poem of the WHITE DOE, founded upon a Tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

## DEDICATION.

IN trellised shed with clustering roses gay,\*  
 And, MARY ! oft beside our blazing fire,  
 When years of wedded life were as a day  
 Whose current answers to the heart's desire,  
 Did we together read in Spenser's Lay  
 How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,  
 The gentle Una, of celestial birth,<sup>1</sup>  
 To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the earth.

Ah, then, Belovèd ! pleasing was the smart,  
 And the tear precious in compassion shed  
 For Her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,  
 Did meekly bear the pang unmerited ;  
 Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart  
 The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led,—  
 And faithful, loyal in her innocence,  
 Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a faery shell  
 Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught ;  
 Free Fancy prized each specious miracle,  
 And all its finer inspiration caught ;  
 Till in the bosom of our rustic Cell,  
 We by a lamentable change were taught  
 That " bliss with mortal Man may not abide :"  
 How nearly joy and sorrow are allied !

<sup>1</sup> 1386.

The gentle Una, born of heavenly birth,

1815.

\* In the orchard at Town-end Cottage, Grasmere.—ED.

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,  
 For us the voice of melody was mute.  
 —But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow,  
 And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,  
 Heaven's breathing influence failed not to bestow  
 A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit,  
 Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content  
 From blossoms wild of fancies innocent.

It soothed us—it beguiled us—then, to hear  
 Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell  
 And griefs whose aery motion comes not near  
 The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel :  
 Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,  
 High over hill and low adown the dell  
 Again we wandered, willing to partake  
 All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake.

Then, too, this Song *of mine* once more could please,  
 Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless sleep,  
 Is tempered and allayed by sympathies  
 Aloft ascending, and descending deep,  
 Even to the inferior Kinds ; whom forest-trees  
 Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep  
 Of the sharp winds ;—fair Creatures !—to whom Heaven  
 A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.

This tragic Story cheered us ; for it speaks  
 Of female patience winning firm repose ;  
 And, of the recompense that conscience seeks,<sup>1</sup>  
 A bright, encouraging, example shows ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

. . . which conscience seeks,

1815.

Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest breaks,  
 Needful amid life's ordinary woes ;—  
 Hence, not for them unfitted who would bless  
 A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,  
 Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive :  
 O, that my mind were equal to fulfil  
 The comprehensive mandate which they give—  
 Vain aspiration of an earnest will !  
 Yet in this moral Strain a power may live,  
 Belovèd Wife ! such solace to impart  
 As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
 April 20, 1815.

“ Action is transitory—a step, a blow,  
 The motion of a muscle—this way or that—  
 'Tis done ; and in the after-vacancy  
 We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed :  
 Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,  
 And has the nature of infinity.  
 Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem  
 And irremovable) gracious openings lie,  
 By which the soul—with patient steps of thought  
 Now toiling, wafted now on wings of prayer—  
 May pass in hope, and though from mortal bonds  
 Yet undelivered, rise with sure ascent  
 Even to the fountain-head of peace divine.” \*

---

\* The above extract, which follows the *Dedication* of the Poem to Mrs Wordsworth, is taken from his youthful tragedy of *The Borderers*. (See Vol. I. p. 167.) In the prefatory note to *The Borderers*—first published in 1842—Wordsworth says he would not have made use of these lines in *The White Doe*, if he could have foreseen the time when he would be induced to publish the tragedy.

In a note to the edition of 1836, he says, “ ‘ Action is transitory.’ ”

"They that deny a God destroy Man's nobility : for certainly Man is of kinn to the Beast by his Body ; and if he be not of kinn to God by his spirit, he is a base ignoble Creature. It destroys likewise Magnanimity, and the raising of humane Nature ; for take an example of a Dogg, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on, when he finds himself maintained by a Man, who to him is instead of a God, or Melior Natura. Which courage is manifestly such, as that Creature without that confidence of a better Nature than his own could never attain. So Man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human Nature in itself could not obtain."

LORD BACON.

---

### Canto First.

FROM Bolton's old monastic tower \*  
The bells ring loud with gladsome power ;

---

This and the five lines that follow were either read or recited by me, more than thirty years since, to the late Mr Hazlitt, who quoted some expressions in them (imperfectly remembered) in a work of his, published several years ago."

In the quarto edition of 1815 the following lines precede the extract from Lord Bacon ; and in the edition of 1820, they succeed it.

*" Weak is the will of Man, his judgment blind ;  
Remembrance persecutes, and Hope betrays ;  
Heavy is woe ;—and joy, for human kind,  
A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze !"—  
Thus might he paint our lot of mortal days,  
Who wants the glorious faculty, assigned  
To elevate the more-than-reasoning Mind,  
And colour life's dark cloud with orient rays.  
Imagination is that sacred power,  
Imagination lofty and refined:  
'Tis hers to pluck the amaranthine Flower  
Of Faith, and round the Sufferer's temples bind  
Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest shower,  
And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.—*END.

\* "It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament : but the Poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. 'Formerly,' says Dr Whitaker, 'over the Transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the Choir, which must have terminated westward, in some building of superior height to the ridge.'" W. W., 1815.

The sun shines bright;<sup>1</sup> the fields are gay  
 With people in their best array  
 Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf,  
 Along the banks of crystal Wharf,<sup>2</sup>  
 Through the vale retired and lowly,  
 Trooping to that summons holy.  
 And, up among the moorlands, see  
 What sprinklings of blithe company!  
 Of lasses and of shepherd grooms,  
 That down the steep hills force their way,  
 Like cattle through the budded brooms;  
 Path, or no path, what care they?  
 And thus in joyous mood they hie  
 To Bolton's mouldering Priory.

What would they there?—Full fifty years  
 That sumptuous Pile, with all its peers,  
 Too harshly hath been doomed to taste  
 The bitterness of wrong and waste:  
 Its courts are ravaged; but the tower  
 Is standing with a voice of power,  
 That ancient voice which wont to call  
 To mass or some high festival;  
 And in the shattered fabric's heart  
 Remaineth one protected part;  
 A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,\*

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

The sun is bright; . . . .

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1820.

Along the banks of the crystal Wharf,

1815.

---

\* "The Nave of the Church having been reserved at the Dissolution, for the use of the Saxon Cure, is still a parochial Chapel; and, at this day, is as well kept as the neatest English Cathedral." W. W., 1815.

Closely embowered and trimly drest ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And thither young and old repair,  
 This Sabbath-day, for praise and prayer.

Fast the church-yard fills ;—anon  
 Look again, and they are all gone ;<sup>2</sup>  
 The cluster round the porch, and the folk  
 Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak ! \*  
 And scarcely have they disappeared  
 Ere the prelusive hymn is heard :—  
 With one consent the people rejoice,  
 Filling the church with a lofty voice !  
 They sing a service which they feel ;  
 For 'tis the sunrise now of zeal ;  
 Of a pure faith the vernal prime—<sup>3</sup>  
 In great Eliza's golden time.

A moment ends the fervent din,  
 And all is hushed, without and within ;  
 For though the priest, more tranquilly,  
 Recites the holy liturgy,  
 The only voice which you can hear  
 Is the river murmuring near.  
 —When soft !—the dusky trees between,  
 And down the path through the open green,  
 Where is no living thing to be seen ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

A rural Chapel, neatly dressed,  
 In covert like a little nest ;

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1820.

. . . all are gone ;

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

And faith and hope are in their prime.

1815.

---

\* "At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for £70. According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1400 feet of timber." W. W., 1815.

And through yon gateway, where is found,  
 Beneath the arch with ivy bound,  
 Free entrance to the church-yard ground—<sup>1</sup>  
 Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,  
 Comes gliding in serene and slow,  
 Soft and silent as a dream,  
 A solitary Doe !  
 White she is as lily of June,  
 And beauteous as the silver moon  
 When out of sight the clouds are driven  
 And she is left alone in heaven ;  
 Or like a ship some gentle day  
 In sunshine sailing far away,  
 A glittering ship, that hath the plain  
 Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead !  
 Lie quiet in your church-yard bed !  
 Ye living, tend your holy cares ;  
 Ye multitude, pursue your prayers ;  
 And blame not me if my heart and sight  
 Are occupied with one delight !  
 'Tis a work for sabbath hours  
 If I with this bright Creature go :  
 Whether she be of forest bowers,  
 From the bowers of earth below ;  
 Or a Spirit for one day given,  
 A pledge of grace from purest heaven.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> After "ground" then follows, in edd. 1815 to 1832,  
 And right across the verdant sod  
 Towards the very house of God ;

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

A gift of grace from purest heaven.



What harmonious pensive changes  
 Wait upon her as she ranges  
 Round and through this Pile of state  
 Overthrown and desolate !  
 Now a step or two her way  
 Leads through space of open day,<sup>1</sup>  
 Where the enamoured sunny light  
 Brightens her that was so bright ;  
 Now doth a delicate shadow fall,  
 Falls upon her like a breath,  
 From some lofty arch or wall,  
 As she passes underneath :  
 Now some gloomy nook partakes  
 Of the glory that she makes,—  
 High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,  
 With perfect cunning framed as well  
 Of stone, and ivy, and the spread  
 Of the elder's bushy head ;  
 Some jealous and forbidding cell,  
 That doth the living stars repel,  
 And where no flower hath leave to dwell.

The presence of this wandering Doe  
 Fills many a damp obscure recess  
 With lustre of a saintly show ;  
 And, reappearing, she no less  
 Sheds on the flowers that round her blow  
 A more than sunny liveliness.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Is through space of open day,

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.
 And reappearing, she no less  
 To the open day gives blessedness.

1815.

But say, among these holy places,  
 Which thus assiduously she paces,  
 Comes she with a votary's task,  
 Rite to perform, or boon to ask ?  
 Fair Pilgrim ! harbours she a sense  
 Of sorrow, or of reverence ?  
 Can she be grieved for quire or shrine,  
 Crushed as if by wrath divine ?  
 For what survives of house where God  
 Was worshipped, or where Man abode ;  
 For old magnificence undone ;  
 Or for the gentler work begun  
 By Nature, softening and concealing,  
 And busy with a hand of healing ?  
 Mourns she for lordly chamber's hearth  
 That to the sapling ash gives birth ;  
 For dormitory's length laid bare  
 Where the wild rose blossoms fair ;  
 Or altar, whence the cross was rent,  
 Now rich with mossy ornament ? <sup>1</sup>  
 —She sees a warrior carved in stone,  
 Among the thick weeds, stretched alone ;  
 A warrior, with his shield of pride  
 Cleaving humbly to his side,  
 And hands in resignation prest,  
 Palm to palm, on his tranquil breast ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

And busy with a hand of healing,—  
 The altar, whence the cross was rent,  
 Now rich with mossy ornament,—  
 The dormitory's length laid bare,  
 Where the wild rose blossoms fair ;  
 And sapling ash, whose place of birth  
 Is that lordly chamber's hearth ?

1815.

For altar . . . .  
 Or dormitory's length . . . .

1827.

As little she regards the sight <sup>1</sup>  
 As a common creature might :  
 If she be doomed to inward care,  
 Or service, it must lie elsewhere.  
 —But hers are eyes serenely bright,  
 And on she moves—with pace how light !  
 Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste  
 The dewy turf with flowers bestrown ;  
 And thus she fares, until at last <sup>2</sup>  
 Beside the ridge of a grassy grave  
 In quietness she lays her down ;  
 Gentle as a weary wave <sup>3</sup>  
 Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died,  
 Against an anchored vessel's side ;  
 Even so, without distress, doth she  
 Lie down in peace, and lovingly.

The day is placid in its going,  
 To a lingering motion bound,  
 Like the crystal stream now flowing  
 With its softest summer sound : <sup>4</sup>  
 So the balmy minutes pass,  
 While this radiant Creatures lies  
 Couched upon the dewy grass,  
 Pensively with downcast eyes.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Methinks she passeth by the sight,

1815

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

And in this way she fares, till at last

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1845.

Gently as a weary wave

1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.
 Like the river in its flowing ;  
 Can there be a softer sound ?

1815.

—But now again the people raise  
 With awful cheer a voice of praise ;<sup>1</sup>  
 It is the last, the parting song ;  
 And from the temple forth they throng,  
 And quickly spread themselves abroad,  
 While each pursues his several road.  
 But some—a variegated band  
 Of middle-aged, and old, and young,  
 And little children by the hand  
 Upon their leading mothers hung—  
 With mute obeisance gladly paid  
 Turn towards the spot, where full in view,<sup>2</sup>  
 The white Doe, to her service true,<sup>3</sup>  
 Her sabbath couch has made.

It was a solitary mound ;  
 Which two spears' length of level ground  
 Did from all other graves divide :  
 As if in some respect of pride ;  
 Or melancholy's sickly mood,  
 Still shy of human neighbourhood ;  
 Or guilt, that humbly would express  
 A penitential loneliness.

“ Look, there she is, my Child ! draw near  
 She fears not, wherefore should we fear ?  
 She means no harm ;”—but still the Boy,  
 To whom the words were softly said,  
 Hung back, and smiled, and blushed for joy,

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

—When now again the people rear  
 A voice of praise, with awful cheer.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Turn with obeisance gladly paid  
 Towards the spot, where, full in view,

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

The lovely Doe, of whitest hue,

1815.

A shamed-faced blush of glowing red !  
 Again the Mother whispered low,  
 " Now you have seen the famous Doe ;  
 From Rylstone she hath found her way  
 Over the hills this sabbath day ;  
 Her work, whate'er it be, is done,  
 And she will depart when we are gone ;  
 Thus doth she keep, from year to year,  
 Her sabbath morning, foul or fair." <sup>1</sup>

Bright was the Creature,<sup>2</sup> as in dreams  
 The Boy had seen her, yea, more bright ;  
 But is she truly what she seems ?  
 He asks with insecure delight,  
 Asks of himself, and doubts,—and still  
 The doubt returns against his will :  
 Though he, and all the standers-by,  
 Could tell a tragic history  
 Of facts divulged, wherein appear  
 Substantial motive, reason clear,  
 Why thus the milk-white Doe is found  
 Couchant beside that lonely mound ;  
 And why she duly loves to pace  
 The circuit of this hallowed place.  
 Nor to the Child's inquiring mind  
 Is such perplexity confined :  
 For, spite of sober Truth that sees  
 A world of fixed remembrances  
 Which to this mystery belong,

<sup>1</sup> Inserted in edd. 1815 to 1832, before " Bright was the Creature,"  
 This whisper soft repeats what he  
 Had known from early infancy.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Bright is the Creature, . . .

1815.

If, undeceived, my skill can trace  
 The characters of every face,  
 There lack not strange delusion here,  
 Conjecture vague, and idle fear,  
 And superstitious fancies strong,  
 Which do the gentle Creature wrong.

That bearded, staff-supported Sire—  
 Who in his boyhood often fed <sup>1</sup>  
 Full cheerily on convent-bread  
 And heard old tales by the convent-fire,  
 And to his grave will go with scars,  
 Relics of long and distant wars— <sup>2</sup>  
 That Old Man, studious to expound  
 The spectacle, is mounting high <sup>3</sup>  
 To days of dim antiquity ;  
 When Lady Aäliza mourned \*  
 Her Son, and felt in her despair  
 The pang of unavailing prayer ;  
 Her Son in Wharf's abysses drowned,  
 The noble Boy of Egremound.  
 From which affliction—when the grace

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Who in his youth had often fed	1815.
. . . hath often fed.	1827.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

And lately hath brought home the scars	
Gathered in long and distant wars.	1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

. . . . hath mounted high	1815.
---------------------------	-------

---

\* "The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr Whitaker's book, and in the poem, 'The Force of Prayer,' &c." (See pp. 90, &c., of this Volume). W. W., 1815.

Of God had in her heart found place—<sup>1</sup>  
 A pious structure, fair to see,  
 Rose up, this stately Priory !  
 The Lady's work ;—but now laid low ;  
 To the grief of her soul that doth come and go  
 In the beautiful form of this innocent Doe :  
 Which, though seemingly doomed in its breast to sustain  
 A softened remembrance of sorrow and pain,  
 Is spotless, and holy, and gentle, and bright ;  
 And glides o'er the earth like an angel of light.

Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door ;\*  
 And, through the chink in the fractured floor  
 Look down, and see a griesly sight ;  
 A vault where the bodies are buried upright !  
 There, face by face, and hand by hand,  
 The Claphams and Mauleverers stand ;  
 And, in his place, among son and sire,  
 Is John de Clapham, that fierce Esquire,  
 A valiant man, and a name of dread  
 In the ruthless wars of the White and Red ;  
 Who dragged Earl Pembroke from Banbury church  
 And smote off his head on the stones of the porch !  
 Look down among them, if you dare ;  
 Oft does the White Doe loiter there,

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

From which affliction, when God's grace  
 At length had in her heart found place,

1815.

---

\* “ ‘At the East end of the North aisle of Bolton Priory Church is a chantry belonging to Bethmesly Hall, and a vault, where, according to tradition, the Claphams’ (who inherited this estate, by the female line from the Mauliverers) ‘were interred upright.’ John de Clapham, of whom this ferocious act is recorded, was a name of great note in his time ; ‘he was a vehement partisan of the House of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffords, seemed to survive.’ ”—W. W., 1815.

Prying into the darksome rent ;  
 Nor can it be with good intent :  
 So thinks that Dame of haughty air,  
 Who hath a Page her book to hold,  
 And wears a frontlet edged with gold.  
 Harsh thoughts with her high mood agree—  
 Who counts among her ancestry<sup>1</sup>  
 Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously !

That slender Youth, a scholar pale,  
 From Oxford come to his native vale,  
 He also hath his own conceit :  
 It is, thinks he, the gracious Fairy,  
 Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet\*

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Well may her thoughts be harsh ; for she  
 Numbers among her ancestry

1815.

---

\* “In the second volume of Poems published by the author, will be found one, entitled, ‘Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford the Shepherd to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors.’ To that Poem is annexed an account of this personage, chiefly extracted from Burn’s and Nicholson’s History of Cumberland and Westmoreland. It gives me pleasure to add these further particulars concerning him from Dr Whitaker, who says, ‘he retired to the solitude of Barden, where he seems to have enlarged the tower out of a common keeper’s lodge, and where he found a retreat equally favourable to taste, to instruction, and to devotion. The narrow limits of his residence shew that he had learned to despise the pomp of greatness, and that a small train of servants could suffice him, who had lived to the age of thirty a servant himself. I think this nobleman resided here almost entirely when in Yorkshire, for all his charters which I have seen are dated at Barden.

“‘His early habits, and the want of those artificial measures of time which even shepherds now possess, had given him a turn for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies, and, having purchased such an apparatus as could then be procured, he amused and informed himself by those pursuits, with the aid of the Canons of Bolton, some of whom are said to have been well versed in what was then known of the science.

“‘I suspect this nobleman to have been sometimes occupied in a more visionary pursuit, and probably in the same company.

“‘For, from the family evidences, I have met with two MSS. on the



In his wanderings solitary :  
 Wild notes she in his hearing sang,  
 A song of Nature's hidden powers ;  
 That whistled like the wind, and rang  
 Among the rocks and holly bowers.  
 'Twas said that She all shapes could wear ;  
 And oftentimes before him stood,  
 Amid the trees of some thick wood,  
 In semblance of a lady fair ;  
 And taught him signs, and showed him sights,  
 In Craven's dens, on Cumbrian heights ;<sup>1</sup>  
 When under cloud of fear he lay,  
 A shepherd clad in homely grey ;  
 Nor left him at his later day.  
 And hence, when he, with spear and shield,  
 Rode full of years to Flodden-field,

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

. . . . on Cumbria's heights ; 1815.

---

subject of Alchemy, which, from the character, spelling, &c., may almost certainly be referred to the reign of Henry the Seventh. If these were originally deposited with the MSS. of the Cliffords, it might have been for the use of this nobleman. If they were brought from Bolton at the Dissolution, they must have been the work of those Canons whom he almost exclusively conversed with.

“ In these peaceful employments Lord Clifford spent the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, and the first years of his son. But in the year 1513, when almost sixty years old, he was appointed to a principal command over the army which fought at Flodden, and shewed that the military genius of the family had neither been chilled in him by age, nor extinguished by habits of peace.

“ He survived the battle of Flodden ten years, and died April 23rd, 1523, aged about 70. I shall endeavour to appropriate to him a tomb, vault, and chantry, in the choir of the church of Bolton, as I should be sorry to believe that he was deposited when dead at a distance from the place which in his life-time he loved so well.

“ By his last will he appointed his body to be interred at Shap if he died in Westmoreland ; or at Bolton if he died in Yorkshire.”

“ With respect to the Canons of Bolton, Dr Whitaker shews from MSS. that not only alchemy but astronomy was a favourite pursuit with them.”—W. W., 1815.

His eye could see the hidden spring,  
 And how the current was to flow ;  
 The fatal end of Scotland's King,  
 And all that hopeless overthrow.  
 But not in wars did he delight,  
*This* Clifford wished for worthier might ;  
 Nor in broad pomp, or courtly state ;  
 Him his own thoughts did elevate,—  
 Most happy in the shy recess  
 Of Barden's lowly quietness.<sup>1</sup>  
 And choice of studious friends had he  
 Of Bolton's dear fraternity ;  
 Who, standing on this old church tower,  
 In many a calm propitious hour,  
 Perused, with him, the starry sky ;  
 Or, in their cells, with him did pry  
 For other lore,—by keen desire  
 Urged to close toil with chemic fire ;<sup>2</sup>  
 In quest belike of transmutations  
 Rich as the mine's most bright creations.<sup>3</sup>  
 But they and their good works are fled,  
 And all is now disquieted—  
 And peace is none, for living or dead !

Ah, pensive Scholar, think not so,  
 But look again at the radiant Doe !  
 What quiet watch she seems to keep,  
 Alone, beside that grassy heap !

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Of Barden's humble quietness.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

. . . . through strong desire  
 Searching the earth with chemic fire.

1815.

<sup>3</sup> These two lines added in 1836.

Why mention other thoughts unmeet  
 For vision so composed and sweet ?  
 While stand the people in a ring,  
 Gazing, doubting, questioning ;  
 Yea, many overcome in spite  
 Of recollections clear and bright ;  
 Which yet do unto some impart  
 An undisturbed repose of heart.  
 And all the assembly own a law  
 Of orderly respect and awe ;  
 But see—they vanish one by one,  
 And last, the Doe herself is gone.

Harp ! we have been full long beguiled  
 By vague thoughts, lured by fancies wild ;<sup>1</sup>  
 To which, with no reluctant strings,  
 Thou hast attuned thy murmurings ;  
 And now before this Pile we stand  
 In solitude, and utter peace :  
 But, Harp ! thy murmurs may not cease—  
 A Spirit, with his angelic wings,  
 In soft and breeze-like visitings,<sup>2</sup>  
 Has touched thee—and a Spirit's hand :  
 A voice is with us—a command  
 To chant, in strains of heavenly glory,  
 A tale of tears, a mortal story !

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

By busy dreams, and fancies wild,

2815.

<sup>2</sup> 1842.

Thou hast breeze-like visitings ;

For a Spirit with angel wings

Hath touched thee, . . . .

1815.

A Spirit, with angelic wings

In soft and breeze-like visitings

Has touched thee,

1836.

A Spirit, with his angelic wings,

C.

*Canto Second.*

THE Harp in lowliness obeyed ;  
 And first we sang of the green-wood shade  
 And a solitary Maid ;  
 Beginning, where the song must end,  
 With her, and with her sylvan Friend ;  
 The Friend who stood before her sight,  
 Her only unextinguished light ;  
 Her last companion in a dearth  
 Of love, upon a hopeless earth.

For She it was—this Maid, who wrought<sup>1</sup>  
 Meekly, with foreboding thought,  
 In vermeil colours and in gold  
 An unblest work ; which, standing by,  
 Her Father did with joy behold,—  
 Exulting in its imagery ;<sup>2</sup>  
 A Banner, fashioned to fulfil<sup>3</sup>  
 Too perfectly his headstrong will :  
 For on this Banner had her hand  
 Embroidered (such her Sire's command)<sup>4</sup>  
 The sacred Cross ; and figured there  
 The five dear wounds our Lord did bear ;  
 Full soon to be uplifted high,  
 And float in rueful company !

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

For She it was—'twas She who wrought, 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Exulting in the imagery ; 1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

A Banner, one that did fulfil, 1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.

. . (such was the command) 1815.

It was the time when England's Queen  
 Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign dread ;  
 Nor yet the restless crown had been  
 Disturbed upon her virgin head ;  
 But now the inly-working North  
 Was ripe to send its thousands forth,  
 A potent vassalage, to fight  
 In Percy's and in Neville's right,  
 Two Earls fast leagued in discontent,  
 Who gave their wishes open vent ;  
 And boldly urged a general plea,  
 The rites of ancient piety  
 To be triumphantly restored,  
 By the stern justice of the sword !<sup>1</sup>  
 And that same Banner, on whose breast  
 The blameless Lady had exprest  
 Memorials chosen to give life  
 And sunshine to a dangerous strife ;  
 That Banner, waiting for the Call,  
 Stood quietly in Rylstone-hall.

It came ; and Francis Norton said,  
 " O Father ! rise not in this fray—  
 The hairs are white upon your head ;  
 Dear Father, hear me when I say  
 It is for you too late a day !  
 Bethink you of your own good name :  
 A just and gracious Queen have we,  
 A pure religion, and the claim

<sup>1</sup> 1845.

To be by force of arms renewed ;  
 Glad prospect for the multitude.  
 To be triumphantly restored,  
 By the dread justice of the sword.

1815.

1820.

Of peace on our humanity.—  
 'Tis meet that I endure your scorn ;  
 I am your son, your eldest born ;  
 But not for lordship or for land,  
 My Father, do I clasp your knees ;  
 The Banner touch not, stay your hand,  
 This multitude of men disband,  
 And live at home in blameless ease ;<sup>1</sup>  
 For these my brethren's sake, for me ;  
 And, most of all, for Emily ! ”

Tumultuous noises filled the hall ;<sup>2</sup>  
 And scarcely could the Father hear  
 That name—pronounced with a dying fall—  
 The name of his only Daughter dear,  
 As on<sup>4</sup> the banner which stood near  
 He glanced a look of holy pride,  
 And his moist eyes were glorified ;<sup>5</sup>  
 Then did he seize the staff, and say :<sup>6</sup>  
 “ Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name :  
 Keep thou this ensign till the day

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

And live at home in blissful ease, 1815

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Loud noise was in the crowded hall ; 1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

That name—which had a dying fall— 1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.

And on . . . . . 1815.

<sup>5</sup> 1820.

And his wet eyes were glorified, 1815.

<sup>6</sup> 1836.

Then seized the staff, and thus did say : 1815.

---

\* “ That strain again ; it had a dying fall. ”—Shakespeare (Twelfth N  
 Act i., Scene i.)—ED.

When I of thee require the same :  
 Thy place be on my better hand ;—  
 And seven as true as thou, I see,  
 Will cleave to this good cause and me.”  
 He spake, and eight brave sons straightway  
 All followed him, a gallant band !

Thus, with his sons, when forth he came,  
 The sight was hailed with loud acclaim <sup>1</sup>  
 And din of arms and minstrelsy,  
 From all his warlike tenantry,  
 All horsed and harnessed with him to ride,—  
 A voice to which the hills replied !<sup>2</sup>

But Francis, in the vacant hall,  
 Stood silent under dreary weight,—  
 A phantasm, in which roof and wall  
 Shook, tottered, swam before his sight ;  
 A phantasm like a dream of night !  
 Thus overwhelmed, and desolate,  
 He found his way to a postern-gate ;  
 And, when he waked, his languid eye <sup>3</sup>  
 Was on the calm and silent sky ;  
 With air about him breathing sweet,  
 And earth's green grass beneath his feet ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Forth when Sire and Sons appeared  
 A gratulating shout was reared,  
 With din . . . . . 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

A shout to which the hills replied. 1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

And when he waked at length, his eye 1815.

Nor did he fail ere long to hear  
 A sound of military cheer,  
 Faint—but it reached that sheltered spot ;  
 He heard, and it disturbed him not.

There stood he, leaning on a lance  
 Which he had grasped unknowingly,  
 Had blindly grasped in that strong trance  
 That dimness of heart-agony ;  
 There stood he, cleansed from the despair  
 And sorrow of his fruitless prayer.  
 The past he calmly hath reviewed :  
 But where will be the fortitude  
 Of this brave man, when he shall see  
 That Form beneath the spreading tree,  
 And know that it is Emily ?<sup>1</sup>

He saw her where in open view  
 She sate beneath the spreading yew—  
 Her head upon her lap, concealing  
 In solitude her bitter feeling :<sup>2</sup>  
 “ Might ever son *command* a sire,  
 The act were justified to-day.”  
 This to himself—and to the Maid,  
 Whom now he had approached, he said—  
 “ Gone are they,—they have their desire ;  
 And I with thee one hour will stay,  
 To give thee comfort if I may.”

<sup>1</sup> Added in edd. 1815 to 1832.

Oh ! hide them from each other, hide,  
 Kind Heaven, this pair severely tried !

<sup>2</sup> Added in edd. 1815 to 1832.

How could he choose but shrink or sigh ?  
 He shrunk, and muttered inwardly,



She heard, but looked not up, nor spake ;  
 And sorrow moved him to partake  
 Her silence ; then his thoughts turned round,  
 And fervent words a passage found.<sup>1</sup>

“ Gone are they, bravely, though misled ;  
 With a dear Father at their head !  
 The Sons obey a natural lord ;  
 The Father had given solemn word  
 To noble Percy ; and a force  
 Still stronger bends him to his course.  
 This said, our tears to-day may fall  
 As at an innocent funeral.  
 In deep and awful channel runs  
 This sympathy of Sire and Sons ;  
 Untried our Brothers have been loved <sup>2</sup>  
 With heart by simple nature moved ; <sup>3</sup>  
 And now their faithfulness is proved :  
 For faithful we must call them, bearing  
 That soul of conscientious daring.  
 —There were they all in circle—there  
 Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,  
 John with a sword that will not fail,  
 And Marmaduke in fearless mail,  
 And those bright Twins were side by side,  
 And there, by fresh hopes beautified,

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

He paused, her silence to partake,  
 And long it was before he spake :  
 Then, all at once, his thoughts turned round.  
 And fervent words a passage found.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Untried our Brothers were beloved

1815.

<sup>3</sup> This line not in edd. 1815 to 1832.

Stood He,<sup>1</sup> whose arm yet lacks the power  
 Of man, our youngest, fairest flower !  
 I, by the right <sup>2</sup> of eldest born,  
 And in a second father's place,  
 Presumed to grapple with their scorn,<sup>3</sup>  
 And meet their pity face to face ;  
 Yea, trusting in God's holy aid,  
 I to my Father knelt and prayed ;  
 And one, the pensive Marmaduke,  
 Methought, was yielding inwardly,  
 And would have laid his purpose by,  
 But for a glance of his Father's eye,  
 Which I myself could scarcely brook.

" Then be we, each and all, forgiven !  
 Thou, chiefly thou, my Sister dear,<sup>4</sup>  
 Whose pangs are registered in heaven—  
 The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,  
 And smiles, that dared to take their place,  
 Meek filial smiles, upon thy face,  
 As that unhallowed Banner grew  
 Beneath a loving old Man's view.  
 Thy part is done—thy painful part ;  
 Be thou then satisfied in heart !  
 A further, though far easier, task  
 Than thine hath been, my duties ask ;  
 With theirs my efforts cannot blend,  
 I cannot for such cause contend ;

<sup>1</sup> 1827.      Was He,      .      .      .      .      .      1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.      I, in the right      .      .      .      .      1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1827.      Presumed to stand against their scorn,      1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.      Thee, chiefly thee, my Sister dear      1815.

Their aims I utterly forswear ;  
But I in body will be there.  
Unarmed and naked will I go,  
Be at their side, come weal or woe :  
On kind occasions I may wait,  
See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.  
Bare breast I take and an empty hand." \*—  
Therewith he threw away the lance,  
Which he had grasped in that strong trance ;  
Spurned it, like something that would stand  
Between him and the pure intent  
Of love on which his soul was bent.

“ For thee, for thee, is left the sense  
Of trial past without offence  
To God or man ; such innocence,  
Such consolation, and the excess  
Of an unmerited distress ;  
In that thy very strength must lie.  
—O Sister, I could prophesy !  
The time is come that rings the knell  
Of all we loved, and loved so well :  
Hope nothing, if I thus may speak  
To thee, a woman, and thence weak :  
Hope nothing, I repeat ; for we  
Are doomed to perish utterly :  
'Tis meet that thou with me divide  
The thought while I am by thy side,  
Acknowledging a grace in this,  
A comfort in the dark abyss.  
But look not for me when I am gone,  
And be no farther wrought upon :

---

\* See the Old Ballad,—“ The Rising of the North.”—W. W. 1827.

Farewell all wishes, all debate,  
 All prayers for this cause, or for that !  
 Weep, if that aid thee ; but depend  
 Upon no help of outward friend ;  
 Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave  
 To fortitude without reprieve.  
 For we must fall, both we and ours—  
 This Mansion and these pleasant bowers,  
 Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead, hall—  
 Our fate is theirs, will reach them all ;  
 The young horse must forsake his manger,  
 And learn to glory in a Stranger ;  
 The hawk forget his perch ; the hound  
 Be parted from his ancient ground :  
 The blast will sweep us all away—  
 One desolation, one decay !  
 And even this Creature !” which words saying,  
 He pointed to a lovely Doe,  
 A few steps distant, feeding, straying ;  
 Fair creature, and more white than snow !  
 “Even she will to her peaceful woods  
 Return, and to her murmuring floods,  
 And be in heart and soul the same  
 She was before she hither came ;  
 Ere she had learned to love us all,  
 Herself beloved in Rylstone-hall.  
 —But thou, my Sister, doomed to be  
 The last leaf on a blasted tree ;<sup>1</sup>  
 If not in vain we breathed the breath <sup>2</sup>  
 Together of a purer faith ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

—But thou, my Sister, doomed to be  
 The last leaf which by heaven’s decree  
 Must hang upon a blasted tree ;

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

If not in vain we have breathed the breath.

1815.

If hand in hand we have been led,  
 And thou, (O happy thought this day !)  
 Not seldom foremost in the way ;  
 If on one thought our minds have fed,  
 And we have in one meaning read ;  
 If, when at home our private weal  
 Hath suffered from the shock of zeal,  
 Together we have learned to prize  
 Forbearance and self-sacrifice ;  
 If we like combatants have fared,  
 And for this issue been prepared ;  
 If thou art beautiful, and youth  
 And thought endue thee with all truth—  
 Be strong ;—be worthy of the grace  
 Of God, and fill thy destined place :  
 A Soul, by force of sorrows high,  
 Uplifted to the purest sky  
 Of undisturbed humanity !”

He ended,—or she heard no more ;  
 He led her from the yew-tree shade,  
 And at the mansion’s silent door,  
 He kissed the consecrated Maid,  
 And down the valley then pursued,<sup>1</sup>  
 Alone, the armèd Multitude.

## Canto Third.

Now joy for you who from the towers  
 Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear,\*

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

. . . . he pursued,

1815.

---

\* “Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged to the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland. See Dr Percy’s account.”—W. W., 1815.

Telling melancholy hours !<sup>1</sup>  
 Proclaim it, let your Masters hear  
 That Norton with his band is near !  
 The watchmen from their station high  
 Pronounced the word,—and the Earls descry,  
 Well-pleased, the armèd Company<sup>2</sup>  
 Marching down the banks of Were.

Said fearless Norton to the pair  
 Gone forth to greet him on the plain—<sup>3</sup>  
 “This meeting, noble Lords ! looks fair,  
 I bring with me a goodly train ;  
 Their hearts are with you : hill and dale  
 Have helped us : Ure we crossed, and Swale,  
 And horse and harness followed—see  
 The best part of their Yeomanry !  
 —Stand forth, my Sons !—these eight are mine,  
 Whom to this service I commend ;  
 Which way soe’er our fate incline,  
 These will be faithful to the end ;  
 They are my all ”—voice failed him here—  
 “My all save one, a Daughter dear !  
 Whom I have left, Love’s mildest birth,<sup>4</sup>  
 The meekest Child on this blessed earth.  
 I had—but these are by my side,  
 These Eight, and this is a day of pride !

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Now joy for you and sudden cheer,  
 Ye watchmen upon Brancepeth Towers ;  
 Looking forth in doubt and fear,  
 Telling melancholy hours !

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Forthwith the armed Company

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

Gone forth to hail him on the plain—

1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.

. . . . the mildest birth,

1815.

The time is ripe. With festive din  
Lo! how the people are flocking in,—  
Like hungry fowl to the feeder's hand  
When snow lies heavy upon the land."

He spake bare truth; for far and near  
From every side came noisy swarms  
Of Peasants in their homely gear;  
And, mixed with these, to Brancepeth came  
Grave Gentry of estate and name,  
And Captains known for worth in arms;  
And prayed the Earls in self-defence  
To rise, and prove their innocence.—  
"Rise, noble Earls, put forth your might  
For holy Church, and the People's right!"

The Norton fixed, at this demand,  
His eye upon Northumberland,  
And said; "The Minds of Men will own  
No loyal rest while England's Crown  
Remains without an Heir, the bait  
Of strife and factions desperate;  
Who, paying deadly hate in kind  
Through all things else, in this can find  
A mutual hope, a common mind;  
And plot, and pant to overwhelm  
All ancient honour in the realm.  
—Brave Earls! to whose heroic veins  
Our noblest blood is given in trust,  
To you a suffering State complains,  
And ye must raise her from the dust.  
With wishes of still bolder scope  
On you we look, with dearest hope;  
Even for our Altars—for the prize

In Heaven, of life that never dies ;  
For the old and holy Church we mourn,  
And must in joy to her return.  
Behold !"—and from his Son whose stand  
Was on his right, from that guardian hand  
He took the Banner, and unfurled  
The precious folds—" behold," said he,  
" The ransom of a sinful world ;  
Let this your preservation be ;  
The wounds of hands and feet and side,  
And the sacred Cross on which Jesus died !  
—This bring I from an ancient hearth,  
These Records wrought in pledge of love  
By hands of no ignoble birth,  
A Maid o'er whom the blessed Dove  
Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood  
While she the holy work pursued."  
" Uplift the standard !" was the cry  
From all the listeners that stood round,  
" Plant it,—by this we live or die."  
The Norton ceased not for that sound,  
But said ; " The prayer which ye have heard,  
Much injured Earls ! by these preferred,  
Is offered to the Saints, the sigh  
Of tens of thousands, secretly."  
" Uplift it !" cried once more the Band,  
And then a thoughtful pause ensued :  
" Uplift it !" said Northumberland—  
Whereat from all the multitude  
Who saw the Banner reared on high  
In all its dread emblazonry,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In edd. 1815 to 1832 is added after " emblazonry"—  
With tumult and indignant rout,



A voice of uttermost joy brake out :  
 The transport was rolled down the river of Were,  
 And Durham, the time-honoured Durham, did hear,  
 And the towers of Saint Cuthbert were stirred by the  
 shout ! \*

Now was the North in arms:—they shine  
 In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,  
 At Percy's voice : and Neville sees  
 His followers gathering in from Tees,  
 From Were, and all the little rills  
 Concealed among the forkèd hills—  
 Seven hundred Knights, Retainers all  
 Of Neville, at their Master's call  
 Had sate together in Raby Hall !  
 Such strength that Earldom held of yore ;  
 Nor wanted at this time rich store  
 Of well-appointed chivalry.  
 —Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,  
 And greet the old paternal shield,  
 They heard the summons ;—and, furthermore,  
 Horsemen and Foot of each degree,<sup>1</sup>  
 Unbound by pledge of fealty,  
 Appeared, with free and open hate  
 Of novelties in Church and State ;  
 Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire ;  
 And Romish priest, in priest's attire.  
 And thus, in arms, a zealous Band  
 Proceeding under joint command,

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Came Foot and Horse-men of each degree,

1815.

---

\* The tower of the Cathedral of Durham, of which St Cuthbert is the patron saint.—ED.

To Durham first their course they bear ;  
 And in Saint Cuthbert's ancient seat  
 Sang mass,—and tore the book of prayer,—  
 And trod the bible beneath their feet.

Thence marching southward smooth and free  
 'They mustered their host at Wetherby,  
 Full sixteen thousand fair to see ;' \*  
 The Choicest Warriors of the North !  
 But none for beauty and for worth<sup>1</sup>  
 Like those eight sons—who, in a ring,  
 (Ripe men, or blooming in life's spring)<sup>2</sup>  
 Each with a lance, erect and tall,  
 A falchion, and a buckler small,  
 Stood by their Sire, on Clifford-moor,<sup>3</sup>  
 To guard the Standard which he bore.  
 On foot they girt their Father round ;  
 And so will keep the appointed ground  
 Where'er their march : no steed will he<sup>4</sup>  
 Henceforth bestride ;—triumphantly,

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

But none for undisputed worth 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.Like those eight Sons ; who in a ring,  
 Each with a lance— . . . 1815.Like those eight sons—embosoming  
 Determined thoughts—who in a ring,  
 Each with a lance . . . 1827.<sup>3</sup> The ed. of 1815, has after "Clifford-moor," the line  
 In youthful beauty flourishing.<sup>4</sup> 1836.—With feet that firmly pressed the ground  
 They stood, and girt their Father round  
 Such was his choice,—no steed will he 1815.

He stands upon the grassy sod,<sup>1</sup>  
 Trusting himself to the earth, and God.  
 Rare sight to embolden and inspire !  
 Proud was the field of Sons and Sire ;  
 Of him the most ; and, sooth to say,  
 No shape of man in all the array  
 So graced the sunshine of that day,  
 The monumental pomp of age  
 Was with this goodly Personage ;  
 A stature undepressed in size,  
 Unbent, which rather seemed to rise,  
 In open victory o'er the weight  
 Of seventy years, to loftier height ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Magnific limbs of withered state ;  
 A face to fear and venerate ;  
 Eyes dark and strong ; and on his head  
 Bright locks of silver hair, thick spread,<sup>3</sup>  
 Which a brown morion half-concealed,  
 Light as a hunter's of the field ;  
 And thus, with girdle round his waist,  
 Whereon the Banner-staff might rest  
 At need, he stood, advancing high  
 The glittering, floating Pageantry.

<sup>1</sup> 1845.

He stood upon the verdant sod,

1815.

He stood upon the grassy sod,

1820.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

. . . to higher height ;

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1827.

Rich locks . . . . .

1815.

Who sees him ?—thousands see, and One <sup>1</sup>  
 With unparticipated gaze ;  
 Who 'mong those thousands, friend hath none,  
 And treads in solitary ways.  
 He, following wheresoe'er he might,  
 Hath watched the Banner from afar,  
 As shepherds watch a lonely star,  
 Or mariners the distant light  
 That guides them through a stormy night.<sup>2</sup>  
 And now, upon a chosen plot  
 Of rising ground, yon heathy spot !  
 He takes alone his far-off stand,<sup>3</sup>  
 With breast unmailed, unweaponed hand.  
 Bold is his aspect ; but his eye  
 Is pregnant with anxiety,  
 While, like a tutelary Power,  
 He there stands fixed from hour to hour :  
 Yet sometimes in more humble guise,  
 Upon the turf-clad height he lies  
 Stretched, herdsman-like, as if to bask  
 In sunshine were his only task,<sup>4</sup>  
 Or by his mantle's help to find  
 A shelter from the nipping wind :  
 And thus, with short oblivion blest,  
 His weary spirits gather rest.  
 Again he lifts his eyes ; and lo !

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Who sees him ?—many see, and One

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

That guides them on a . . . .

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

He takes this day his far-off stand,

1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.
 Stretched out upon the ground he lies,—  
 As if it were his only task  
 Like Herdsman in the sun to bask,

1815.

The pageant glancing to and fro ;  
 And hope is wakened by the sight,  
 He thence may learn, ere fall of night,<sup>1</sup>  
 Which way the tide is doomed to flow.

To London were the Chieftains bent ;  
 But what avails the bold intent ?  
 A Royal army is gone forth  
 To quell the RISING OF THE NORTH ;  
 They march with Dudley at their head,  
 And, in seven days' space, will to York be led !—  
 Can such a mighty Host be raised  
 Thus suddenly, and brought so near ?  
 The Earls upon each other gazed,  
 And Neville's cheek grew pale with fear ;  
 For, with a high and valiant name,  
 He bore a heart of timid frame ;<sup>2</sup>  
 And bold if both had been, yet they  
 ' Against so many may not stay.'\*  
 Back therefore will they hie to seize<sup>3</sup>  
 A strong Hold on the banks of Tees ;  
 There wait a favourable hour,  
 Until Lord Dacre with his power  
 From Naworth come ;<sup>4</sup> and Howard's aid  
 Be with them openly displayed.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.      That he thence may learn      .      .      .      1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.      And Neville was oppressed with fear ;  
              For, though he bore a valiant name,  
              His heart was of a timid frame,      1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.      And therefore will retreat to seize      1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.      From Naworth comes      .      .      .      1815.

---

\* From the old Ballad.—W. W. 1827.

While through the Host, from man to man,  
 A rumour of this purpose ran,  
 The Standard trusting to the care<sup>1</sup>  
 Of him who heretofore did bear  
 That charge, impatient Norton sought  
 The Chieftains to unfold his thought,  
 And thus abruptly spake ;—" We yield  
 (And can it be ?) an unfought field !—  
 How oft has strength, the strength of heaven,<sup>2</sup>  
 To few triumphantly been given !  
 Still do our very children boast  
 Of mitred Thurston—what a Host  
 He conquered !\*—Saw we not the Plain  
 (And flying shall behold again)  
 Where faith was proved ?—while to battle moved  
 The Standard, on the Sacred Wain  
 That bore it, compassed round by a bold  
 Fraternity of Barons old ;  
 And with those grey-haired champions stood,  
 Under the saintly ensigns three,  
 The infant Heir of Mowbray's blood—  
 All confident of victory !—<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

The Standard giving to the care

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

How often hath the strength of heaven

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

The Standard on the sacred wain,  
 On which the grey-haired Barons stood,  
 And the infant Heir of Mowbray's blood,  
 Beneath the saintly Ensigns three,  
 Their confidence and victory !

1815.

. . . . .  
 . . . . .

Stood confident of victory.

1820.

---

\* " See the Historians for the account of this memorable battle, usually denominated the Battle of the Standard."—W. W., 1815.

Shall Percy blush, then, for his name?  
 Must Westmoreland be asked with shame  
 Whose were the numbers, where the loss,  
 In that other day of Neville's Cross? \*

---

\* " 'In the night before the battle of Durham was stricken and begun, the 17th day of October, *anno* 1346, there did appear to John Fosse, then Prior of the abbey of Durham, commanding him to take the holy Corporax-cloth, wherewith St Cuthbert did cover the chalice when he used to say mass, and to put the same holy relique like to a banner-cloth upon the point of a spear, and the next morning to go and repair to a place on the west side of the city of Durham, called the Red Hills, where the Maid's Bower wont to be, and there to remain and abide till the end of the battle. To which vision, the Prior obeying, and taking the same for a revelation of God's grace and mercy by the mediation of holy St Cuthbert, did accordingly the next morning, with the monks of the said abbey, repair to the said Red Hills, and there most devoutly humbling and prostrating themselves in prayer for the victory in the said battle : (a great multitude of the Scots running and pressing by them, with intention to have spoiled them, yet had no power to commit any violence under such holy persons, so occupied in prayer, being protected and defended by the mighty Providence of Almighty God, and by the mediation of Holy St Cuthbert, and the presence of the holy relique). And, after many conflicts and warlike exploits there had and done between the English men and the King of Scots and his company, the said battle ended, and the victory was obtained, to the great overthrow and confusion of the Scots, their enemies : And then the said Prior and monks, accompanied with Ralph Lord Nevil, and John Nevil his son, and the Lord Percy, and many other nobles of England, returned home and went to the abbey church, there joining in hearty prayer and thanksgiving to God and holy St Cuthbert for the victory achieved that day.'

"This battle was afterwards called the Battle of Neville's Cross from the following circumstance :—

" 'On the west side of the city of Durham, where two roads pass each other, a most notable, famous, and goodly cross of stone-work was erected, and set up to the honour of God for the victory there obtained in the field of battle, and known by the name of Nevil's Cross, and built at the sole cost of the Lord Ralph Nevil, one of the most excellent and chief persons in the said battle.' The Relique of St Cuthbert afterwards became of great importance in military events. For soon after this battle, says the same author, 'The Prior caused a goodly and sumptuous banner to be made, (which is then described at great length,) and in the midst of the same banner-cloth was the said holy relique and corporax-cloth enclosed, &c. &c. and so sumptuously finished, and absolutely perfected, this banner was dedicated to holy St Cuthbert, of intent and purpose, that for the future it should be carried to any battle, as occasion should serve ; and was never carried and shewed at any battle but by the especial grace of God Almighty, and the mediation of holy St Cuthbert, it brought home

When the Prior of Durham with holy hand  
 Raised, as the Vision gave command,  
 Saint Cuthbert's Relic—far and near  
 Kenned on the point of a lofty spear ;  
 While the Monks prayed in Maiden's Bower  
 To God descending in his power.<sup>1</sup>  
 Less would not at our need be due  
 To us, who war against the Untrue ;—  
 The delegates of Heaven we rise,  
 Convoked the impious to chastise :  
 We, we, the sanctities of old  
 Would re-establish and uphold :  
 Be warned"—His zeal the Chiefs confounded,  
 But word was given and the trumpet sounded :<sup>2</sup>  
 Back through the melancholy Host  
 Went Norton, and resumed his post.  
 Alas ! thought he, and have I borne

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

When, as the Vision gave command,  
 The Prior of Durham with holy hand  
 Saint Cuthbert's Relic did uprear  
 Upon the point of a lofty spear,  
 And God descended in his power,  
 While the Monks prayed in Maiden's Bower. 1815

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

. . . . . uphold."—  
 —The Chiefs were by his zeal confounded,  
 But word was given—and the trumpet sounded ; 1815.

---

victory ; which banner-cloth, after the dissolution of the abbey, fell into the possession of Dean WHITTINGHAM, whose wife was called KATHARINE, being a French woman, (as is most credibly reported by eye-witnesses,) did most injuriously burn the same in her fire, to the open contempt and disgrace of all ancient and goodly reliques.'—Extracted from a book entitled, 'Durham Cathedral, as it stood before the Dissolution of the Monastery.' It appears, from the old metrical History, that the above-mentioned banner was carried by the Earl of Surry to Flodden Field."—W. W., 1815.



This Banner raised with joyful pride,<sup>1</sup>  
 This hope of all posterity,  
 By those dread symbols sanctified ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Thus to become at once the scorn  
 Of babbling winds as they go by,  
 A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye,  
 To the light clouds a mockery !<sup>3</sup>  
 —“ Even these poor eight of mine would stem ”—  
 Half to himself, and half to them  
 He spake—“ would stem, or quell, a force  
 Ten times their number, man and horse ;  
 This by their own unaided might,  
 Without their father in their sight,  
 Without the Cause for which they fight ;  
 A Cause, which on a needful day  
 Would breed us thousands brave as they.”  
 —So speaking, he his reverend head  
 Raised towards that Imagery once more :<sup>4</sup>  
 But the familiar prospect shed  
 Despondency unfelt before :  
 A shock of intimations vain,  
 Dismay, and superstitious pain,  
 Fell on him, with the sudden thought  
 Of her by whom the work was wrought :—  
 Oh wherefore was her countenance bright  
 With love divine and gentle light ?

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

This Banner raised so joyfully, . 1815.

<sup>2</sup> This line added in 1836.<sup>3</sup> 1836.

To the frail clouds . . . . . 1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1827.

—So speaking, he upraised his head  
 Towards that Imagery once more ; 1815.

She would not, could not, disobey,<sup>1</sup>  
 But her Faith leaned another way.  
 Ill tears she wept; I saw them fall,  
 I overheard her as she spake  
 Sad words to that mute Animal,  
 The White Doe, in the hawthorn brake;  
 She steeped, but not for Jesu's sake,  
 This Cross in tears; by her, and One  
 Unworthier far we are undone—  
 Her recreant Brother—he prevailed  
 Over that tender Spirit—assailed  
 Too oft, alas! by her whose head  
 In the cold grave hath long been laid:<sup>2</sup>  
 She first in reason's dawn beguiled  
 Her docile unsuspecting Child:<sup>3</sup>  
 Far back—far back my mind must go,  
 To reach the well-spring of this woe!

While thus he brooded, music sweet  
 Of border tunes was played to cheer  
 The footsteps of a quick retreat;  
 But Norton lingered in the rear,  
 Stung with sharp thoughts; and ere the last  
 From his distracted brain was cast,

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

She did in passiveness obey,

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Her Brother was it who assailed  
 Her tender spirit and prevailed,  
 Her other Parent, too, whose head  
 In the cold grave hath long been laid,

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

From reason's earliest dawn beguiled  
 The docile, unsuspecting Child:

1815.

Before his Father, Francis stood,  
And spake in firm and earnest mood.<sup>1</sup>

“ Though here I bend a suppliant knee  
In reverence, and unarmed, I bear  
In your indignant thoughts my share ;  
Am grieved this backward march to see  
So careless and disorderly.  
I scorn your Chiefs—men who would lead,  
And yet want courage at their need :  
Then look at them with open eyes !  
Deserve they further sacrifice ?—  
If—when they shrink, nor dare oppose  
In open field their gathering foes,  
(And fast, from this decisive day,  
Yon multitude must melt away ;)  
If now I ask a grace not claimed  
While ground was left for hope ; unblamed  
Be an endeavour that can do  
No injury to them or you.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

While thus he brooded, music sweet  
Was played to cheer them in retreat ;  
But Norton lingered in the rear :  
Thought followed thought—and ere the last  
Of that unhappy train was past,  
Before him Francis did appear.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

“ Now when 'tis not your aim to oppose,”  
Said he, “ in open field your Foes ;  
Now that from this decisive day  
Your multitude must melt away,  
An unarmed Man may come unblamed ;  
To ask a grace, that was not claimed  
Long as your hopes were high, he now  
May hither bring a fearless brow ;  
When his discountenance can do

My Father ! I would help to find  
 A place of shelter, till the rage  
 Of cruel men do like the wind  
 Exhaust itself and sink to rest :  
 Be Brother now to Brother joined !  
 Admit me in the equipage  
 Of your misfortunes, that at least,  
 Whatever fate remain behind,  
 I may bear witness in my breast  
 To your nobility of mind ! ”

“ Thou enemy, my bane and blight !  
 Oh ! bold to fight the Coward’s fight  
 Against all good ”—but why declare,  
 At length, the issue of a prayer  
 Which love had prompted, yielding scope  
 Too free to one bright moment’s hope ? <sup>1</sup>  
 Suffice it that the Son, who strove  
 With fruitless effort to allay  
 That passion, prudently gave way ; <sup>2</sup>

No injury,—may come to you.  
 Though in your cause no part I bear,  
 Your indignation I can share ;  
 Am grieved this backward march to see,  
 How careless and disorderly !  
 I scorn your chieftains, Men who lead,  
 And yet want courage at their need ;  
 Then look at them with open eyes !  
 Deserve they farther sacrifice ?  
 My Father, &c.”

1815.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

At length, the issue of this prayer?  
 Or how, from his depression raised,  
 The Father on his Son had gazed ;

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1845.

Suffice it that the Son gave way,  
 Now strove that passion to allay,

1815.

Nor did he turn aside to prove  
 His Brothers' wisdom or their love—  
 But calmly from the spot withdrew ;  
 His best endeavours to renew,  
 Should e'er a kindlier time ensue. <sup>1</sup>

Canto Fourth.

'Tis night : in silence looking down,  
 The Moon, from cloudless ether, sees <sup>2</sup>  
 A Camp, and a beleaguered Town,  
 And Castle, like a stately crown  
 On the steep rocks of winding Tees ;—  
 And southward far, with moor between,  
 Hill-top, and flood, and forest green, <sup>3</sup>  
 The bright Moon sees that valley small  
 Where Rylstone's old sequestered Hall  
 A venerable image yields  
 Of quiet to the neighbouring fields ;  
 While from one pillared chimney breathes  
 The smoke, and mounts in silver wreaths, <sup>4</sup>  
 —The courts are hushed ;—for timely sleep  
 The greyhounds to their kennel creep ;  
 The peacock in the broad ash tree

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

The like endeavours to renew,  
 Should e'er a kindlier time ensue.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

From cloudless ether looking down,  
 The moon, this tranquil evening, sees  
 A Camp, &c.

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

. . . . . with moors between,  
 Hill-tops, and floods, and forests green,

1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1827.

The silver smoke, and mounts in wreaths,

1815.

Aloft is roosted for the night,  
 He who in proud prosperity  
 Of colours manifold and bright  
 Walked round, affronting the daylight ;  
 And higher still, above the bower  
 Where he is perched, from yon lone Tower  
 The hall-clock in the clear moonshine  
 With glittering finger points at nine.

Ah ! who could think that sadness here  
 Hath any sway ? or pain, or fear ?  
 A soft and lulling sound is heard  
 Of streams inaudible by day ;  
 The garden pool's dark surface, stirred  
 By the night insects in their play,  
 Breaks into dimples small and bright ;  
 A thousand, thousand rings of light  
 That shape themselves and disappear  
 Almost as soon as seen :—and lo !  
 Not distant far, the milk-white Doe—  
 The same who quietly was feeding <sup>1</sup>  
 On the green herb, and nothing heeding,  
 When Francis, uttering to the Maid <sup>2</sup>  
 His last words in the yew-tree shade,

<sup>1</sup> 1815.

The same fair Creature who was nigh 1827.  
 1836 returns to text of 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

The same fair Creature which was nigh  
 Feeding in tranquillity,  
 When Francis uttered to the Maid 1815.

Involved whate'er by love was brought  
 Out of his heart, or crossed his thought,  
 Or chance presented to his eye,  
 In one sad sweep of destiny—<sup>1</sup>  
 The same fair Creature, who hath found  
 Her way into forbidden ground ;  
 Where now—within this spacious plot  
 For pleasure made, a goodly spot,  
 With lawns and beds of flowers, and shades  
 Of trellis-work in long arcades,  
 And cirque and crescent framed by wall  
 Of close-clipt foliage green and tall,  
 Converging walks, and fountains gay,  
 And terraces in trim array—  
 Beneath yon cypress spiring high,  
 With pine and cedar spreading wide  
 Their darksome boughs on either side,  
 In open moonlight doth she lie ;  
 Happy as others of her kind,  
 That, far from human neighbourhood,  
 Range unrestricted as the wind,  
 Through park, or chase, or savage wood.

But see the consecrated Maid  
 Emerging from a cedar shade  
 To open moonshine, where the Doe  
 Beneath the cypress-spire is laid ;<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The last four lines not in edd. 1815 to 1832.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

But where at this still hour is she,  
 The consecrated Emily ?  
 Even while I speak, behold the Maid  
 Emerging from the cedar shade  
 To open moonshine where the Doe  
 Beneath the cypress-spire is laid ;

Like a patch of April snow—  
 Upon a bed of herbage green,  
 Lingering in a woody glade  
 Or behind a rocky screen—  
 Lonely relic ! which, if seen  
 By the shepherd, is passed by  
 With an inattentive eye.  
 Nor more regard doth She bestow  
 Upon the uncomplaining Doe <sup>1</sup>  
 Now couched at ease, thought oft this day  
 Not unperplexed nor free from pain,  
 When she had tried, and tried in vain,  
 Approaching in her gentle way,  
 To win some look of love, or gain  
 Encouragement to sport or play;  
 Attempts which still the heart-sick Maid  
 Rejected, or with slight repaid.<sup>2</sup>

Yet Emily is soothed ;—the breeze  
 Came fraught with kindly sympathies.  
 As she approached yon rustic Shed <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In edd. 1815 to 1832, a paragraph ends at " Doe ! "

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Yet the meek Creature was not free,  
 Erewhile, from some perplexity :  
 For thrice hath she approached, this day,  
 The thought-bewildered Emily ;  
 Endeavouring, in her gentle way,  
 Some smile or look of love to gain,—  
 Encouragement to sport or play ;  
 Attempts which by the unhappy Maid  
 Have all been slighted or gainsaid.

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

—O welcome to the viewless breeze !  
 'Tis fraught with acceptable feeling,  
 And instantaneous sympathies



Hung with late-flowering woodbine, spread  
 Along the walls and overhead,  
 The fragrance of the breathing flowers  
 Revived <sup>1</sup> a memory of those hours  
 When here, in this remote alcove,  
 (While from the pendent woodbine came  
 Like odours, sweet as if the same)  
 A fondly-anxious Mother strove  
 To teach her salutary fears  
 And mysteries above her years.  
 Yes, she is soothed ; an Image faint,  
 And yet not faint—a presence bright  
 Returns to her—that blessed Saint <sup>2</sup>  
 Who with mild looks and language mild  
 Instructed here her darling Child,  
 While yet a prattler on the knee,  
 To worship in simplicity  
 The invisible God, and take for guide  
 The faith reformed and purified.

'Tis flown—the Vision, and the sense  
 Of that beguiling influence ;  
 “ But oh ! thou Angel from above,  
 Mute Spirit of maternal love,<sup>3</sup>

Into the Sufferer's bosom stealing ;—  
 Ere she hath reached yon rustic Shed 1815.

Yet is she soothed ; the viewless breeze,  
 Comes fraught with kindlier sympathies :  
 Ere she hath reached yon rustic Shed. 1827

. . . . .  
 Ere she had reached . . . . . 1832.

<sup>1</sup> 1836. Revives . . . . . 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836. . . . —'tis that bless'd Saint 1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836. Thou Spirit of maternal love, 1815.

That stood'st before my eyes, more clear  
 Than ghosts are fabled to appear  
 Sent upon embassies of fear ;  
 As thou thy presence hast to me  
 Vouchsafed, in radiant ministry  
 Descend on Francis ; nor forbear  
 To greet him with a voice, and say ;—  
 ' If hope be a rejected stay,  
 Do thou, my christian Son, beware  
 Of that most lamentable snare,  
 The self-reliance of despair ! ' ” <sup>1</sup>

Then from within the embowered retreat  
 Where she had found a grateful seat  
 Perturbed she issues. She will go !  
 Herself will follow to the war,  
 And clasp her Father's knees ;—ah, no !  
 She meets the insuperable bar,  
 The injunction by her Brother laid ;  
 His parting charge—but ill obeyed—  
 That interdicted all debate,  
 All prayer for this cause or for that ;  
 All efforts that would turn aside  
 The headstrong current of their fate :  
*Her duty is to stand and wait ;*  
 In resignation to abide  
 The shock, AND FINALLY SECURE  
 O'ER PAIN AND GRIEF A TRIUMPH PURE. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Descend on Francis :—through the air  
 Of this sad earth to him repair,  
 Speak to him with a voice, and say,  
 “ That he must cast despair away ! ”

<sup>2</sup> Italics and capitals first given in ed. 1820.

—She feels it, and her pangs are checked.<sup>1</sup>  
 But now, as silently she paced  
 The turf, and thought by thought was chased,  
 Came One who, with sedate respect,  
 Approached, and, greeting her, thus spake;<sup>2</sup>  
 “An old man’s privilege I take :  
 Dark is the time—a woeful day !  
 Dear daughter of affliction, say  
 How can I serve you ? point the way.”

“Rights have you, and may well be bold :  
 You with my Father have grown old  
 In friendship—strive—for his sake go—  
 Turn from us all the coming woe :<sup>3</sup>  
 This would I beg ; but on my mind  
 A passive stillness is enjoined  
 On you, if room for mortal aid  
 Be left, is no restriction laid ;<sup>4</sup>  
 You not forbidden to recline  
 With hope upon the Will divine.”

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

—She knows, she feels it, and is cheered ;  
 At least her present pangs are checked. 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

—And now an ancient Man appeared,  
 Approaching her with grave respect.  
 Down the smooth walk which then she trod,  
 He paced along the silent sod,  
 And greeting her thus gently spake, 1815.  
 But now an ancient . . . . 1827.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

In friendship ;—go—from him—from me—  
 Strive to avert this misery. 1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.

—If prudence offer help or aid,  
 On *you* is no restriction laid ; 1815.

"Hope," said the old Man, "must abide  
 With all of us, whate'er betide.<sup>1</sup>  
 In Craven's Wilds is many a den,  
 To shelter persecuted men :  
 Far under ground is many a cave,  
 Where they might lie as in the grave,  
 Until this storm hath ceased to rave :<sup>2</sup>  
 Or let them cross the River Tweed,  
 And be at once from peril freed !"

"Ah tempt me not !" she faintly sighed ;  
 "I will not counsel nor exhort,  
 With my condition satisfied ;  
 But you, at least, may make report  
 Of what befalls ;—be this your task—  
 This may be done ;—'tis all I ask !"

She spake—and from the Lady's sight  
 The Sire, unconscious of his age,  
 Departed promptly as a Page  
 Bound on some errand of delight.  
 —The noble Francis—wise as brave,  
 Thought he, may want not skill to save.<sup>3</sup>  
 With hopes in tenderness concealed,  
 Unarmed he followed to the field ;  
 Him will I seek : the insurgent Powers  
 Are now besieging Barnard's Towers,—  
 "Grant that the moon which shines this night  
 May guide them in a prudent flight !"

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

"Hope," said the Sufferer's zealous Friend,  
 "Must not forsake us till the end.—

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1820.

. . . had ceased . . .

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

. . . may have the skill to save :

1815.

But quick the turns of chance and change,  
 And knowledge has a narrow range ;  
 Whence idle fears, and needless pain,  
 And wishes blind, and efforts vain.—  
 The Moon may shine, but cannot be  
 Their guide in flight—already she <sup>1</sup>  
 Hath witnessed their captivity.  
 She saw the desperate assault  
 Upon that hostile castle made ;—  
 But dark and dismal is the vault  
 Where Norton and his sons are laid !  
 Disastrous issue !—he had said  
 “ This night yon faithless Towers must yield,<sup>2</sup>  
 Or we for ever quit the field.  
 —Neville is utterly dismayed,  
 For promise fails of Howard’s aid ;  
 And Dacre to our call replies  
 That *he* is unprepared to rise.  
 My heart is sick ;—this weary pause  
 Must needs be fatal to our cause.<sup>3</sup>  
 The breach is open—on the wall,  
 This night the Banner shall be planted ! ”  
 —’Twas done : his Sons were with him—all ;  
 They belt him round with hearts undaunted,  
 And others follow ;—Sire and Son  
 Leap down into the court ;—“ ’Tis won ”—  
 They shout aloud—but Heaven decreed  
 That with their joyful shout should close

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Their flight the fair Moon may not see ;  
 For, from mid-heaven, already she

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

This night yon haughty Towers .

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

. . . to the cause.

1815.

The triumph of a desperate deed <sup>1</sup>  
 Which struck with terror friends and foes  
 The friend shrinks back—the foe recoils  
 From Norton and his filial band ;  
 But they, now caught within the toils,  
 Against a thousand cannot stand ;—  
 The foe from numbers courage drew,  
 And overpowered that gallant few.  
 “ A rescue for the Standard ! ” cried  
 The Father from within the walls ;  
 But, see, the sacred Standard falls !—  
 Confusion through the Camp spread wide : <sup>2</sup>  
 Some fled ; and some their fears detained :  
 But ere the Moon had sunk to rest  
 In her pale chambers of the west  
 Of that rash levy nought remained.

### Canto Fifth.

HIGH on a point of rugged ground  
 Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell  
 Above the loftiest ridge or mound  
 Where foresters or shepherds dwell,  
 An edifice of warlike frame  
 Stands single—Norton Tower its name—\*

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

They shout aloud—but Heaven decreed  
                     Another close  
                     To that brave deed  
 Which struck with terror friends and foes !

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1820.

. . . . . spreads wide :

1815.

---

\* “ It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr Whitaker.  
 ‘ Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the old warfare between the  
 Nortons and Cliffords. On a point of very high ground, commanding an

It fronts all quarters and looks round  
 O'er path and road, and plain and dell,  
 Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream  
 Upon a prospect without bound.

The summit of this bold ascent—  
 Though bleak and bare, and seldom free <sup>1</sup>  
 As Pendle-hill or Pennygent  
 From wind, or frost, or vapours wet—  
 Had often heard the sound of glee  
 When there the youthful Nortons met,  
 To practice games and archery :  
 How proud and happy they ! the crowd  
 Of Lookers-on how pleased and proud !  
 And from the scorching noon-tide sun,<sup>2</sup>  
 From showers, or when the prize was won,  
 They to the Tower withdrew, and there <sup>3</sup>  
 Would mirth run round, with generous fare ;  
 And the stern old Lord of Rylstone-hall,  
 Was happiest, proudest, of them all !<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1820.	. . . . . and as seldom free	1815.
<sup>2</sup> 1820.	And from the heat of the noon-tide sun,	1815.
<sup>3</sup> 1836.	They to the Watch-tower did repair, Commodious Pleasure-house ! and there	1815.
<sup>4</sup> 1836.	He was the proudest of them all !	1815.

immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of a square tower, expressly said by Dodsworth to have been built by Richard Norton. The walls are of strong grout-work, about four feet thick. It seems to have been three stories high. Breaches have been industriously made in all the sides, almost to the ground, to render it untenable.

‘But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds (two of them are pretty entire), of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers.

‘The place is savagely wild, and admirably adapted to the uses of a watch-tower.’—W. W. 1815.

But now, his Child, with anguish pale,  
 Upon the height walks to and fro ;  
 'Tis well that she hath heard the tale,  
 Received the bitterness of woe :<sup>1</sup>  
 For she *had* hoped, had hoped and feared,  
 Such rights did feeble nature claim ;  
 And oft her steps had hither steered,  
 Though not unconscious of self-blame ;  
 For she her brother's charge revered,  
 His farewell words ; and by the same,  
 Yea by her brother's very name,  
 Had, in her solitude, been cheered.

Beside the lonely watch-tower stood <sup>2</sup>  
 That grey-haired Man of gentle blood,  
 Who with her Father had grown old  
 In friendship ; rival hunters they,  
 And fellow warriors in their day :  
 To Rylstone he the tidings brought ;  
 Then on this height the Maid had sought,

<sup>1</sup> In the edition of 1815 these lines follow "the bitterness of woe" :—

Dead are they, they were doomed to die ;  
 The Sons and Father all are dead,  
 All dead save one ; and Emily  
 No more shall seek this Watch-tower high,  
 To look far forth with anxious eye,—  
 She is relieved from hope and dread,  
 Though suffering in extremity.

<sup>2</sup> In edd. 1815 to 1832 the following precedes the line beginning "That grey-haired man" :—

She turned to him, who with his eye  
 Was watching her while on the height  
 She sate, or wandered restlessly,  
 O'erburdened by her sorrow's weight ;  
 To him who this dire news had told,  
 And now beside the Mourner stood ;



And, gently as he could, had told  
The end of that dire Tragedy,  
Which it had been his lot to see.<sup>1</sup>

To him the Lady turned ; “ You said  
That Francis lives, *he* is not dead ? ”

“ Your noble brother hath been spared ;  
To take his life they have not dared ;  
On him, and on his high endeavour  
The light of praise shall shine for ever !  
Nor did he (such Heaven’s will) in vain  
His solitary course maintain ;  
Not vainly struggled in the might  
Of duty, seeing with clear sight ;  
He was their comfort to the last,  
Their joy till every pang was past.

I witnessed when to York they came—  
What, Lady, if their feet were tied ;  
They might deserve a good Man’s blame ;  
But marks of infamy and shame—  
These were their triumph, these their pride ;  
Nor wanted ‘mid the pressing crowd  
Deep feeling, that found utterance loud,<sup>2</sup>  
‘ Lo, Francis comes,’ there were who cried,<sup>3</sup>  
‘ A Prisoner once, but now set free !  
’Tis well, for he the worst defied

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Then on this place the Maid had sought :  
And told, as gently as could be,  
The end of that sad Tragedy,  
Which it had been his lot to see.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> The two last lines not in edd. 1815 to 1820.

<sup>3</sup> 1827.

. . . the people cried,

1815.

Through force of natural piety ;<sup>1</sup>  
 He rose not in this quarrel, he,  
 For concord's sake and England's good,  
 Suit to his Brothers often made  
 With tears, and of his Father prayed—  
 And when he had in vain withstood  
 Their purpose—then did he divide,<sup>2</sup>  
 He parted from them ; but at their side  
 Now walks in unanimity.  
 Then peace to cruelty and scorn,  
 While to the prison they are borne,  
 Peace, peace to all indignity !'

And so in Prison were they laid—  
 Oh hear me, hear me, gentle Maid,  
 For I am come with power to bless,  
 By scattering gleams, through your distress,<sup>3</sup>  
 Of a redeeming happiness.  
 Me did a reverent pity move  
 And privilege of ancient love ;  
 And, in your service, making bold,  
 Entrance I gained to that strong-hold.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

For sake of natural piety ;

1815

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

He rose not in this quarrel, he  
 His Father and his Brothers wooed,  
 Both for their own and Country's good,  
 To rest in peace—he did divide,

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1820.

To scatter gleams through your distress,

1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.

And privilege of ancient love,  
 But most, compassion for your fate,  
 Lady ! for your forlorn estate,  
 Me did these move, and I made bold,  
 And entrance gained to that strong-hold.  
 And privilege of ancient love ;  
 And, in your service, I made bold—  
 And entrance gained to that strong-hold.

1815.

1820.

Your Father gave me cordial greeting ;  
 But to his purposes, that burned  
 Within him, instantly returned :  
 He was commanding and entreating,  
 And said—‘ We need not stop, my Son !  
 Thoughts press, and time is hurrying on.’<sup>1</sup>  
 And so to Francis he renewed  
 His words, more calmly thus pursued.

‘ Might this our enterprise have sped,  
 Change wide and deep the Land had seen,  
 A renovation from the dead,  
 A spring-tide of immortal green :  
 The darksome altars would have blazed  
 Like stars when clouds are rolled away ;  
 Salvation to all eyes that gazed,  
 Once more the Rood had been upraised  
 To spread its arms, and stand for aye.  
 Then, then—had I survived to see  
 New life in Bolton Priory ;  
 The voice restored, the eye of Truth  
 Re-opened that inspired my youth ;  
 To see her in her pomp arrayed—<sup>2</sup>  
 This Banner (for such vow I made)  
 Should on the consecrated breast  
 Of that same Temple have found rest :  
 I would myself have hung it high,  
 Fit offering of glad victory !<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

And said, “ We need not stop, my Son !  
 But I will end what is begun ;  
 ’Tis matter which I do not fear  
 To entrust to any living ear.”

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1820.

Had seen her in her pomp arrayed—

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

Glad offering of glad victory !

1815.

A shadow of such thought remains  
 To cheer this sad and pensive time ;  
 A solemn fancy yet sustains  
 One feeble Being—bids me climb  
 Even to the last—one effort more  
 To attest my Faith, if not restore.

‘ Hear then,’ said he, ‘ while I impart,  
 My Son, the last wish of my heart.  
 The Banner strive thou to regain ;  
 And, if the endeavour prove not vain,<sup>1</sup>  
 Bear it—to whom if not to thee  
 Shall I this lonely thought consign ?—  
 Bear it to Bolton Priory,  
 And lay it on Saint Mary’s shrine ;  
 To wither in the sun and breeze  
 ’Mid those decaying sanctities.  
 There let at least the gift be laid,  
 The testimony there displayed ;  
 Bold proof that with no selfish aim,  
 But for lost Faith and Christ’s dear name,  
 I helmeted a brow though white,  
 And took a place in all men’s sight ;  
 Yea offered up this noble Brood,<sup>2</sup>  
 This fair unrivalled Brotherhood,  
 And turned away from thee, my Son !  
 And left—but be the rest unsaid,  
 The name untouched, the tear unshed ;—  
 My wish is known, and I have done :  
 Now promise, grant this one request,  
 This dying prayer, and be thou blest !’

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

And, if the endeavour be not vain,

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Yea, offered up this beauteous brood,

1815.

Then Francis answered—‘Trust thy Son,  
For, with God’s will, it shall be done!’<sup>1</sup>

The pledge obtained, the solemn word<sup>2</sup>  
Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,  
And Officers appeared in state  
To lead the prisoners to their fate.  
They rose, oh ! wherefore should I fear  
To tell, or, Lady, you to hear ?  
They rose—embraces none were given—  
They stood like trees when earth and heaven  
Are calm ; they knew each other’s worth,  
And reverently the Band went forth.  
They met, when they had reached the door,  
One with profane and harsh intent  
Placed there—that he might go before  
And, with that rueful Banner borne  
Aloft in sign of taunting scorn,  
Conduct them to their punishment :<sup>3</sup>  
So cruel Sussex, unrestrained  
By human feeling, had ordained.  
The unhappy Banner Francis saw,  
And, with a look of calm command,  
Inspiring universal awe,  
He took it from the soldier’s hand ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Then Francis answered fervently,  
“ If God so will, the same shall be.”

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Immediately, this solemn word

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

They met, when they had reached the door,  
The Banner which a Soldier bore,  
One marshalled thus with base intent  
That he in scorn might go before,  
And, holding up this monument,  
Conduct them to their punishment ;

1815.

And all the people that stood round <sup>1</sup>  
 Confirmed the deed in peace profound.  
 —High transport did the Father shed  
 Upon his Son—and they were led,  
 Led on, and yielded up their breath ;  
 Together died, a happy death !—  
 But Francis, soon as he had braved  
 That insult, and the Banner saved,  
 Athwart the unresisting tide <sup>2</sup>  
 Of the spectators occupied  
 In admiration or dismay,  
 Bore instantly <sup>3</sup> his Charge away.”

These things, which thus had in the sight  
 And hearing passed of Him who stood  
 With Emily, on the Watch-tower height,  
 In Rylstone’s woeful neighbourhood,  
 He told ; and oftentimes with voice  
 Of power to comfort or rejoice ; <sup>4</sup>  
 For deepest sorrows that aspire  
 Go high, no transport ever higher.  
 “ Yes—God is rich in mercy,” said  
 The old Man to the silent Maid.  
 “ Yet, Lady ! shines, through this black night,  
 One star of aspect heavenly bright ; <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

. . . that were round

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.This insult, and the Banner saved,  
That moment from among the tide

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

Bore unobserved his charge . . .

1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1820.

Of power to encourage or rejoice ;

1815.

<sup>5</sup> 1836.“ Yet, yet in this affliction,” said  
The old Man to the silent Maid,  
“ Yet, Lady ! heaven is good—the night  
Shows yet a Star which is most bright ;

1815.

Your Brother lives—he lives—is come  
 Perhaps already to his home ;  
 Then let us leave this dreary place.”  
 She yielded, and with gentle pace,  
 Though without one uplifted look,  
 To Rylstone-hall her way she took.

## Canto Sixth.

WHY comes not Francis?—From the doleful City  
 He fled,—and, in his flight, could hear  
 The death-sounds of the Minster-bell :<sup>1</sup>  
 That sullen stroke pronounced farewell  
 To Marmaduke, cut off from pity !  
 To Ambrose that ! and then a knell  
 For him, the sweet half-opened Flower !  
 For all—all dying in one hour !  
 —Why comes not Francis ? Thoughts of love  
 Should bear him to his Sister dear  
 With the fleet motion of a dove ;<sup>2</sup>  
 Yea, like a heavenly messenger  
 Of speediest wing, should he appear.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Why comes not Francis?—Joyful cheer  
 In that parental gratulation,  
 And glow of righteous indignation,  
 Went with him from the doleful City :—  
 He fled—yet in his flight could hear  
 The death-sound of the Minster-bell ;

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

With motion fleet as winged Dove ;  
 . . . as a winged Dove ;

1815.

1832.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

. . . . Messenger,  
 An Angel-guest should he appear.

1815.

Why comes he not ?—for westward fast  
 Along the plain of York he past ;  
 Reckless of what impels or leads,  
 Unchecked he hurries on ;—nor heeds  
 The sorrow, through the Villages,  
 Spread by triumphant cruelties  
 Of vengeful military force,<sup>1</sup>  
 And punishment without remorse.  
 He marked not, heard not, as he fled ;  
 All but the suffering heart was dead  
 For him abandoned to blank awe,  
 To vacancy, and horror strong :  
 And the first object which he saw,<sup>2</sup>  
 With conscious sight, as he swept along—  
 It was the Banner in his hand !  
 He felt—and made a sudden stand.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Why comes he not ? For westward fast	
Along the plain of York he passed ;	
The Banner-staff was in his hand,	
The Imagery concealed from sight,	
And cross the expanse, in open flight,	
Reckless of what impels or leads,	
Unchecked he hurries on ;—nor heeds	
The sorrow of the Villages ;	
From the triumphant cruelties	
Of vengeful military force,	1815.
. . . . .	
Spread by triumphant cruelties	1827.
. . . . .	
. . . . .	
The sorrow through the villages,	1832.
. . . . .	

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

And punishment without remorse,	
Unchecked he journies—under law	
Of inward occupation strong ;	
And the first . . . . .	1815.



He looked about like one betrayed :  
 What hath he done ? what promise made ?  
 O weak, weak moment ! to what end  
 Can such a vain oblation tend,  
 And he the Bearer ?—Can he go  
 Carrying this instrument of woe,  
 And find, find anywhere, a right  
 To excuse him in his Country's sight ?  
 No ; will not all men deem the change  
 A downward course, perverse and strange ?  
 Here is it ;—but how ? when ? must she,  
 The unoffending Emily,  
 Again this piteous object see ?

Such conflict long did he maintain,  
 Nor liberty nor rest could gain : <sup>1</sup>  
 His own life into danger brought  
 By this sad burden—even that thought,  
 Exciting self-suspicion strong,  
 Swayed the brave man to his wrong. <sup>2</sup>  
 And how—unless it were the sense  
 Of all-disposing Providence,  
 Its will unquestionably shown—  
 How has the Banner clung so fast  
 To a palsied and unconscious hand ;  
 Clung to the hand to which it passed  
 Without impediment ? And why  
 But that Heaven's purpose might be known

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Such conflict long did he maintain  
 Within himself, and found no rest ;  
 Calm liberty he could not gain ;  
 And yet the service was unblessed.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1820.

Raised self-suspicion which was strong,  
 Swaying the brave Man to his wrong.

1815.

Doth now no hindrance meet his eye,  
 No intervention, to withstand  
 Fulfilment of a Father's prayer  
 Breathed to a Son forgiven, and blest  
 When all resentments were at rest,  
 And life in death laid the heart bare ?—  
 Then, like a spectre sweeping by,  
 Rushed through his mind the prophecy  
 Of utter desolation made  
 To Emily in the yew-tree shade :  
 He sighed, submitting will and power  
 To the stern embrace of that grasping hour.<sup>1</sup>  
 " No choice is left, the deed is mine—  
 Dead are they, dead !—and I will go,  
 And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,  
 Will lay the Relic on the shrine."

So forward with a steady will  
 He went, and traversed plain and hill :  
 And up the vale of Wharf his way  
 Pursued ;—and, at the dawn of day,

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

. . . . Providence,  
 Its will intelligibly shewn,  
 Finds he the Banner in his hand,  
 Without a thought to such intent,  
 Or conscious effort of his own ?  
 And no obstruction to prevent  
 His Father's wish and last command !  
 And, thus beset, he heaved a sigh ;  
 Remembering his own prophecy  
 Of utter desolation, made  
 To Emily in the yew-tree shade :  
 He sighed, submitting to the power,  
 The might of that prophetic hour.

Attained a summit whence his eyes<sup>1</sup>  
 Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.  
 There Francis for a moment's space  
 Made halt—but hark ! a noise behind  
 Of horsemen at an eager pace !  
 He heard, and with misgiving mind.  
 —'Tis Sir George Bowes who leads the Band :  
 They come, by cruel Sussex sent ;  
 Who, when the Nortons from the hand  
 Of death had drunk their punishment,  
 Bethought him, angry and ashamed,  
 How Francis, with the Banner claimed  
 As his own charge, had disappeared,<sup>2</sup>  
 By all the standers-by revered.  
 His whole bold carriage (which had quelled  
 Thus far the Opposer, and repelled  
 All censure, enterprise so bright  
 That even bad men had vainly striven  
 Against that overcoming light)  
 Was then reviewed, and prompt word given,  
 That to what place soever fled  
 He should be seized, alive or dead.

The troop of horse have gained the height  
 Where Francis stood in open sight.  
 They hem him round—" Behold the proof,"  
 They cried, " the Ensign in his hand !"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Pursued ; and, on the second day,  
 He reached a summit whence his eyes

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

How Francis had the Banner claimed,  
 And with that charge had disappeared ;

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

Behold the Ensign in his hand !"

1815.

*He* did not arm, he walked aloof !  
 For why ?—to save his Father's land ;—  
 Worst Traitor of them all is he,  
 A Traitor dark and cowardly !”

“ I am no Traitor,” Francis said,  
 “ Though this unhappy freight I bear ;  
 And must not part with. But beware ;—  
 Err not, by hasty zeal misled,  
 Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,<sup>1</sup>  
 Whose self-reproaches are too strong !”  
 At this he from the beaten road  
 Retreated towards a brake of thorn,  
 That like <sup>2</sup> a place of vantage showed ;  
 And there stood bravely, though forlorn.  
 In self-defence with warlike brow <sup>3</sup>  
 He stood,—nor weaponless was now ;  
 He from a Soldier's hand had snatched  
 A spear,—and, so protected, watched  
 The Assailants, turning round and round ;  
 But from behind with treacherous wound  
 A Spearman brought him to the Ground.  
 The guardian lance, as Francis fell,  
 Dropped from him ; but his other hand  
 The Banner clenched ; till, from out the Band,  
 One, the most eager for the prize,  
 Rushed in ; and—while, O grief to tell !  
 A glimring sense still left, with eyes

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

. . . . freight I bear ;  
 It weakens me, my heart hath bled  
 Till it is weak—but you beware,  
 Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

Which like . . . .

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1820

. . . with a Warrior's brow

1815.

Unclosed the noble Francis lay—  
 Seized it, as hunters seize their prey ;<sup>1</sup>  
 But not before the warm life-blood  
 Had tinged more deeply, as it flowed,  
 The wounds the broidered Banner showed,  
 Thy fatal work, O Maiden, innocent as good !<sup>2</sup>

Proudly the Horsemen bore away  
 The Standard ; and where Francis lay  
 There was he left alone, unwept,  
 And for two days unnoticed slept.  
 For at that time bewildering fear  
 Possessed the country, far and near ;  
 But, on the third day, passing by,  
 One of the Norton Tenantry  
 Espied the uncovered Corse ; the Man

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

. . . . . had snatched  
 A spear,—and with his eyes he watched  
 Their motions, turning round and round :—  
 His weaker hand the Banner held ;  
 And straight by savage zeal impelled  
 Forth rushed a Pikeman, as if he,  
 Not without harsh indignity,  
 Would seize the same :—instinctively—  
 To smite the Offender—with his lance  
 Did Francis from the brake advance ;  
 But, from behind, a treacherous wound  
 Unfeeling, brought him to the ground,  
 A mortal stroke :—oh, grief to tell !  
 Thus, thus, the noble Francis fell :  
 There did he lie of breath forsaken ;  
 The Banner from his grasp was taken,  
 And borne exultingly away ;  
 And the body was left on the ground where it lay. 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1845.

But not before the warm life-blood  
 Had tinged with searching overflow,  
 More deeply tinged the embroidered show  
 Of His whose side was pierced upon the Rood. 1836.

Shrunk as he recognised the face,  
 And to the nearest homesteads ran  
 And called the people to the place.  
 —How desolate is Rylstone-hall !  
 This was the instant thought of all ;  
 And if the lonely Lady there  
 Should be ; to her they cannot bear  
 This weight of anguish and despair.  
 So, when upon sad thoughts had prest  
 Thoughts sadder still, they deemed it best  
 That, if the Priest should yield assent  
 And no one hinder their intent,<sup>1</sup>  
 Then, they, for Christian pity's sake,  
 In holy ground a grave would make ;  
 And straightway buried he should be  
 In the Church-yard of the Priory.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Two days, as many nights, he slept  
 Alone, unnoticed, and unwept ;  
 For at that time distress and fear  
 Possessed the Country far and near ;  
 The third day, One, who chanced to pass,  
 Beheld him stretched upon the grass.  
 A gentle Forester was he,  
 And of the Norton Tenantry ;  
 And he had heard that by a train  
 Of Horsemen Francis had been slain.  
 Much was he troubled—for the Man  
 Hath recognised his pallid face ;  
 And to the nearest Huts he ran,  
 And called the People to the place.  
 —How desolate is Rylstone-hall !  
 Such was the instant thought of all ;  
 And if the lonely Lady there  
 Should be, this sight she cannot bear !  
 Such thought the Forester expressed,  
 And all were swayed, and deemed it best,  
 That, if the Priest should yield assent  
 And join himself to their intent,

Apart, some little space, was made  
 The grave where Francis must be laid.  
 In no confusion or neglect  
 This did they,—but in pure respect  
 That he was born of gentle blood ;  
 And that there was no neighbourhood  
 Of kindred for him in that ground :  
 So to the Church-yard they are bound,  
 Bearing the body on a bier ;  
 And psalms they sing—a holy sound  
 That hill and vale with sadness hear.<sup>1</sup>

But Emily hath raised her head,  
 And is again disquieted ;  
 She must behold !—so many gone,  
 Where is the solitary One ?  
 And forth from Rylstone-hall stepped she,—  
 To seek her Brother forth she went,  
 And tremblingly her course she bent  
 Towards Bolton's ruined Priory.  
 She comes, and in the vale hath heard  
 The funeral dirge ;—she sees the knot  
 Of people, sees them in one spot—  
 And darting like a wounded bird  
 She reached the grave, and with her breast  
 Upon the ground received the rest,—  
 The consummation, the whole ruth  
 And sorrow of this final truth !

<sup>1</sup> 1843.

Bearing the Body on a bier  
 In decency and humble cheer ;  
 And psalms are sung with holy sound.  
 And psalms they sung . . . .

1815.

1836.

## Canto Seventh.

‘Powers there are  
That touch each other to the quick—in modes  
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,  
No soul to dream of.’\*

THOU Spirit, whose angelic hand  
Was to the harp a strong command,  
Called the submissive strings to wake  
In glory for this Maiden’s sake,  
Say, Spirit! whither hath she fled  
To hide her poor afflicted head?  
What mighty forest in its gloom  
Enfolds her?—is a rifted tomb  
Within the wilderness her seat?  
Some island which the wild waves beat—  
Is that the Sufferer’s last retreat?  
Or some aspiring rock, that shrouds  
Its perilous front in mists and clouds?  
High-climbing rock, low sunless dale,<sup>1</sup>  
Sea, desert, what do these avail?  
Oh take her anguish and her fears  
Into a deep recess of years!<sup>2</sup>

’Tis done;—despoil and desolation  
O’er Rylstone’s fair domain have blown;†

<sup>1</sup> 1820. . . . . deep sunless dale, 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1820. . . . . Into a calm recess of years! 1815.

---

\* This extract (“Powers there are,” &c.) was first prefixed to canto seventh, in the edition of 1836.—Ed.

† “‘After the attainder of Richard Norton, his estates were forfeited to the crown, where they remained till the 2d or 3d of James; they were then granted to Francis Earl of Cumberland.’ From an accurate survey made at that time, several particulars have been extracted by Dr W. It appears that the mansion-house was then in decay. ‘Immediately adjoining is a close, called the Vivery, so called undoubtedly from the French Vivier, or modern Latin Viverium; for there are near the house large



Pools, terraces, and walks are sown <sup>1</sup>  
 With weeds ; the bowers are overthrown,  
 Or have given way to slow mutation,  
 While, in their ancient habitation  
 The Norton name hath been unknown.  
 The lordly Mansion of its pride  
 Is stripped ; the ravage hath spread wide  
 Through park and field, a perishing  
 That mocks the gladness of the Spring !  
 And, with this silent gloom agreeing,  
 Appears a joyless human Being, <sup>2</sup>  
 Of aspect such as if the waste  
 Were under her dominion placed.  
 Upon a primrose bank, her throne  
 Of quietness, she sits alone ; <sup>3</sup>  
 Among the ruins of a wood,  
 Erewhile a covert bright and green,  
 And where full many a brave tree stood,  
 That used to spread its boughs, and ring  
 With the sweet bird's carolling.  
 Behold her, like a virgin Queen,  
 Neglecting in imperial state

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

The walks and pools neglect hath sown

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

There is a joyless human Being,

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.
 Edd. 1815-1832, after "wood" have the line  
 There seated may this maid be seen.

---

remains of a pleasure-ground, such as were introduced in the earlier part of Elizabeth's time, with topiary works, fish-ponds, an island, &c. The whole township was ranged by an hundred and thirty red deer, the property of the Lord, which, together with the wood, had, after the attainder of Mr Norton, been committed to Sir Stephen Tempest. The wood, it seems, had been abandoned to depredations, before which time it appears that the neighbourhood must have exhibited a forest-like and sylvan scene. In this survey, among the old tenants, is mentioned one Richard Kitchen, butler to Mr Norton, who rose in rebellion with his master, and was executed at Ripon."—W.W., 1815.

These outward images of fate,  
And carrying inward a serene  
And perfect sway, through many a thought  
Of chance and change, that hath been brought  
To the subjection of a holy,  
Though stern and rigorous, melancholy !  
The like authority, with grace  
Of awfulness, is in her face,—  
There hath she fixed it ; yet it seems  
To o’ershadow by no native right  
That face, which cannot lose the gleams,  
Lose utterly the tender gleams,  
Of gentleness and meek delight,  
And loving-kindness ever bright :  
Such is her sovereign mien :—her dress  
(A vest with woollen cincture tied,  
A hood of mountain-wool undyed)  
Is homely,—fashioned to express  
A wandering Pilgrim’s humbleness.

And she *hath* wandered, long and far,  
Beneath the light of sun and star ;  
Hath roamed in trouble and in grief,  
Driven forward like a withered leaf,  
Yea like a ship at random blown  
To distant places and unknown.  
But now she dares to seek a haven  
Among her native wilds of Craven ;  
Hath seen again her Father’s roof,  
And put her fortitude to proof ;  
The mighty sorrow hath been borne,  
And she is thoroughly forlorn :  
Her soul doth in itself stand fast,  
Sustained by memory of the past

And strength of Reason ; held above  
 The infirmities of mortal love ;  
 Undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,  
 And awfully impenetrable.

And so—beneath a mouldered tree,  
 A self-surviving leafless oak  
 By unregarded age from stroke  
 Of ravage saved—sate Emily.  
 There did she rest, with head reclined,  
 Herself most like a stately flower,  
 (Such have I seen) whom chance of birth  
 Hath separated from its kind,  
 To live and die in a shady bower,  
 Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant thunder,  
 A troop of deer came sweeping by ;  
 And, suddenly, behold a wonder !  
 For One, among those rushing deer,<sup>1</sup>  
 A single One, in mid career  
 Hath stopped, and fixed her large full eye <sup>2</sup>  
 Upon the Lady Emily ;  
 A Doe most beautiful, clear-white,  
 A radiant creature, silver-bright !

Thus checked, a little while it stayed ;  
 A little thoughtful pause it made ;  
 And then advanced with stealth-like pace,  
 Drew softly near her, and more near—  
 Looked round—but saw no cause for fear ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

For, of that band of rushing deer.

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

. . . . its large full eye  
 . . . . his . . .

1815.

1832.

So to her feet the Creature came,<sup>1</sup>  
 And laid its head upon her knee,  
 And looked into the Lady's face,  
 A look of pure benignity,  
 And fond unclouded memory.  
 It is, thought Emily, the same,  
 The very Doe of other years !—  
 The pleading look the Lady viewed,  
 And, by her gushing thoughts subdued,  
 She melted into tears—  
 A flood of tears, that flowed apace,  
 Upon the happy Creature's face.

Oh, moment ever blest ! O Pair  
 Beloved of Heaven, Heaven's chosen care,<sup>2</sup>  
 This was for you a precious greeting ;  
 And may it prove a fruitful meeting !<sup>3</sup>  
 Joined are they, and the sylvan Doe  
 Can she depart ? can she forego  
 The Lady, once her playful peer,  
 And now her sainted Mistress dear ?  
 And will not Emily receive  
 This lovely chronicler of things  
 Long past, delights and sorrowings ?  
 Lone Sufferer ! will not she believe

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Drew softly near her—and more near,  
 Stopped once again ;—but, as no trace  
 Was found of anything to fear,  
 Even to her feet the Creature came,

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

. . . . . heaven's choicest care !

1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

For both a bounteous, fruitful meeting.

1815.

The promise in that speaking face ;  
 And welcome, as a gift of grace,<sup>1</sup>  
 The saddest thought the Creature brings ?<sup>2</sup>

That day, the first of a re-union  
 Which was to teem with high communion,  
 That day of balmy April weather,  
 They tarried in the wood together.  
 And when, ere fall of evening dew,  
 She from her sylvan haunt withdrew,<sup>3</sup>  
 The White Doe tracked with faithful pace  
 The Lady to her dwelling-place ;  
 That nook where, on paternal ground,  
 A habitation she had found,  
 The Master of whose humble board  
 Once owned her Father for his Lord ;  
 A hut, by tufted trees defended,  
 Where Rylstone brook with Wharf is blended.

When Emily by morning light  
 Went forth, the Doe stood there in sight.<sup>4</sup>  
 She shrunk :—with one frail shock of pain  
 Received and followed by a prayer,  
 She saw the Creature once again ;<sup>5</sup>  
 Shun will she not, she feels, will bear ;—  
 But, wheresoever she looked round,  
 All now was trouble-haunted ground ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

And take this gift of Heaven with grace ?

1815.

<sup>2</sup> This line added in 1836.<sup>3</sup> 1836.

She from this sylvan haunt . . .

1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.

. . . the Doe was there in sight.

1815.

<sup>5</sup> 1836.

Did she behold—saw once again ;

1815.

And therefore now she deems it good  
 Once more this restless neighbourhood  
 To leave.<sup>1</sup> Unwooded, yet unforbidden,  
 The White Doe followed up the vale,  
 Up to another cottage, hidden  
 In the deep fork of Amerdale ;\*  
 And there may Emily restore  
 Herself, in spots unseen before.  
 —Why tell of mossy rock, or tree,  
 By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side,  
 Haunts of a strengthening amity  
 That calmed her, cheered, and fortified ?  
 For she hath ventured now to read  
 Of time, and place, and thought, and deed—  
 Endless history that lies  
 In her silent Follower's eyes ;  
 Who with a power like human reason  
 Discerns the favourable season,  
 Skilled to approach or to retire,—  
 From looks conceiving her desire ;  
 From look, deportment, voice, or mien,  
 That vary to the heart within.  
 If she too passionately wreathed <sup>2</sup>  
 Her arms, or over-deeply breathed,

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

So doth the sufferer deem it good  
 Even once again this neighbourhood  
 To leave. . . . .

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

. . . passionately writhed

1815.

---

\* ““ At the extremity of the parish of Burnsall, the valley of Wharfe forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfedale to the source of the river ; the other is usually called Littondale, but more anciently and properly Amerdale. Dern-brook, which runs along an obscure valley from the N.W., is derived from a Teutonic word, signifying concealment.”—Dr WHITAKER.”—W. W., 1815.

Walked quick or slowly, every mood  
 In its degree was understood ;  
 Then well may their accord be true,  
 And kindest intercourse ensue.

—Oh ! surely 'twas a gentle rousing  
 When she by sudden glimpse espied  
 The White Doe on the mountain browsing,  
 Or in the meadow wandered wide !  
 How pleased, when down the Straggler sank  
 Beside her, on some sunny bank !  
 How soothed, when in thick bower enclosed,  
 They, like a nested pair, reposed !  
 Fair Vision ! when it crossed the Maid  
 Within some rocky cavern laid,  
 The dark cave's portal gliding by,  
 White as whitest cloud on high<sup>1</sup>  
 Floating through the azure sky.<sup>2</sup>  
 —What now is left for pain or fear ?  
 That Presence, dearer and more dear,  
 While they, side by side, were straying,  
 And the Shepherd's pipe was playing,  
 Did now a very gladness yield  
 At morning to the dewy field,<sup>3</sup>  
 And with a deeper peace endued  
 The hour of moonlight solitude.

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

White as the whitest

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1815.

. . . . . an azure sky.

1827.

1836 returns to text of 1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

Did now a very gladness yield  
 At morning to the dewy field,  
 While they side by side were straying,  
 And the Shepherd's pipe was playing ;

1815.

With her Companion, in such frame  
 Of mind, to Rylstone back she came ;  
 And, ranging through the wasted groves,<sup>1</sup>  
 Received the memory of old loves,  
 Undisturbed and undistrest,  
 Into a soul which now was blest  
 With a soft spring-day of holy,  
 Mild, and grateful, melancholy :<sup>2</sup>  
 Not sunless gloom or unenlightened,  
 But by tender fancies brightened.

When the bells of Rylstone played  
 Their sabbath music—' *God us ayde !* ' \*  
 That was the sound they seemed to speak ;  
 Inscriptive legend which I ween  
 May on those holy bells be seen,  
 That legend and her Grandsire's name ;  
 And oftentimes the Lady meek  
 Had in her childhood read the same ;  
 Words which she slighted at that day ;  
 But now, when such sad change was wrought,  
 And of that lonely name she thought—  
 The bells of Rylstone seemed to say,  
 While she sate listening in the shade,  
 With vocal music, ' *God us ayde ;* '  
 And all the hills were glad to bear  
 Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lacked she Reason's firmest power ;  
 But with the White Doe at her side

<sup>1</sup> 1838.

And, wandering through . . . 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1845.

Mild, delicious, melancholy : 1815.

---

\* On one of the bells of Rylstone church, which seems co-eval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, J. N. for John Norton, and the motto, " *God us ayde.* "—W.W., 1815.



Up would she climb to Norton Tower,  
 And thence look round her far and wide,  
 Her fate there measuring ;—all is stilled,—  
 The weak One hath subdued her heart ;<sup>1</sup>  
 Behold the prophecy fulfilled,  
 Fulfilled, and she sustains her part !  
 But here her Brother's words have failed :  
 Here hath a milder doom prevailed ;  
 That she, of him and all bereft,  
 Hath yet this faithful Partner left  
 This one Associate that disproves <sup>2</sup>  
 His words, remains for her, and loves.  
 If tears are shed, they do not fall  
 For loss of him—for one, or all ;  
 Yet, sometimes, sometimes doth she weep  
 Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep ;  
 A few tears down her cheek descend  
 For this her last and living Friend.

Bless, tender Hearts, their mutual lot,  
 And bless for both this savage spot ;  
 Which Emily doth sacred hold  
 For reasons dear and manifold—  
 Here hath she, here before her sight,  
 Close to the summit of this height,  
 The grassy rock-encircled Pound \*  
 In which the Creature first was found.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Up doth she climb to Norton Tower,  
 And thence looks round her far and wide.  
 Her fate there measures,—all is stilled,—  
 The feeble hath subdued her heart ;

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

This single Creature that disproves

1815

---

\* Which is thus described by Dr Whitaker :—“ On the plain summit of the hill are the foundations of a strong wall, stretching from the S. W. to

So beautiful the timid Thrall  
 (A spotless Youngling white as foam)  
 Her youngest Brother brought it home ;  
 The youngest, then a lusty boy,  
 Bore it, or led, to Rylstone-hall  
 With heart brimful of pride and joy !<sup>1</sup>

But most to Bolton's sacred Pile,  
 On favouring nights, she loved to go ;  
 There ranged through cloister, court, and aisle,  
 Attended by the soft-paced Doé ; —

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

So beautiful the spotless Thrall,  
 (A lovely Youngling white as foam,)  
 That it was brought to Rylstone-hall ;  
 Her youngest Brother led it home,  
 The youngest, then a lusty Boy,  
 Brought home the prize—and with what joy !      1815.

---

the N.E. corner of the tower, and to the edge of a very deep glen. From this glen, a ditch, several hundred yards long, runs south to another deep and rugged ravine. On the N. and W. where the banks are very steep, no wall or mound is discoverable, paling being the only fence that would stand on such ground.

“From the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, it appears that such pounds for deer, sheep, &c., were far from being uncommon in the south of Scotland. The principle of them was something like that of a wire mouse-trap. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the surface on the outside, yet so high within that without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was probably taken that these enclosures should contain better feed than the neighbouring parks or forests; and whoever is acquainted with the habits of these sequacious animals, will easily conceive, that if the leader was once tempted to descend into the snare, an herd would follow.”

I cannot conclude without recommending to the notice of all lovers of beautiful scenery—Bolton Abbey and its neighbourhood. This enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Devonshire ; and the superintendence of it has for some years been entrusted to the Rev. William Carr, who has most skilfully opened out its features ; and in whatever he has added, has done justice to the place by working with an invisible hand of art in the very spirit of nature.— W. W., 1815.

Nor feared she in the still moonshine <sup>1</sup>  
 To look upon Saint Mary's shrine ;  
 Nor on the lonely turf that showed  
 Where Francis slept in his last abode.  
 For that she came ; there oft she sate  
 Forlorn, but not disconsolate : <sup>2</sup>  
 And, when she from the abyss returned  
 Of thought, she neither shrunk nor mourned ;  
 Was happy that she lived to greet  
 Her mute Companion as it lay  
 In love and pity at her feet ;  
 How happy in its turn to meet <sup>3</sup>  
 The recognition ! the mild glance  
 Beamed from that gracious countenance ;  
 Communication, like the ray  
 Of a new morning, to the nature  
 And prospects of the inferior Creature !

A mortal Song we sing, by dower <sup>4</sup>  
 Encouraged of celestial power ;  
 Power which the viewless Spirit shed  
 By whom we were first visited ;  
 Whose voice we heard, whose hand and wings  
 Swept like a breeze the conscious strings,  
 When, left in solitude, erewhile  
 We stood before this ruined Pile,  
 And, quitting unsubstantial dreams,  
 Sang in this Presence kindred themes ;

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Nor did she fear . . . . 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.For that she came ; there oft and long  
 She sate in meditation strong : 1815. .<sup>3</sup> 1820.

. . . in her turn . . . . 1815.

<sup>4</sup> 1836.

A mortal Song we frame, . . . . 1815.

Distress and desolation spread  
Through human hearts, and pleasure dead,—  
Dead—but to live again on earth,  
A second and yet nobler birth ;  
Dire overthrow, and yet how high  
The re-ascent in sanctity !  
From fair to fairer ; day by day  
A more divine and loftier way !  
Even such this blessèd Pilgrim trod,  
By sorrow lifted towards her God ;  
Uplifted to the purest sky  
Of undisturbed mortality.  
Her own thoughts loved she ; and could bend  
A dear look to her lowly Friend ;  
There stopped ; her thirst was satisfied  
With what this innocent spring supplied :  
Her sanction inwardly she bore,  
And stood apart from human cares :  
But to the world returned no more,  
Although with no unwilling mind  
Help did she give at need, and joined  
The Wharfdale peasants in their prayers.  
At length, thus faintly, faintly tied  
To earth, she was set free, and died.  
Thy soul, exalted Emily,  
Maid of the blasted family,  
Rose to the God from whom it came !  
—In Rylstone Church her mortal frame  
Was buried by her Mother's side.

Most glorious sunset ! and a ray  
Survives—the twilight of this day—  
In that fair Creature whom the fields  
Support, and whom the forest shields ;

Who, having filled a holy place,  
Partakes, in her degree, Heaven's grace ;  
And bears a memory and a mind  
Raised far above the law of kind ;  
Haunting the spots with lonely cheer  
Which her dear Mistress once held dear :  
Loves most what Emily loved most—  
The enclosure of this church-yard ground ;  
Here wanders like a gliding ghost,  
And every sabbath here is found ;  
Comes with the people when the bells  
Are heard among the moorland dells,  
Finds entrance through yon arch, where way  
Lies open on the sabbath-day ;  
Here walks amid the mournful waste  
Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced,  
And floors encumbered with rich show  
Of fret-work imagery laid low ;  
Paces softly, or makes halt,  
By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault ;  
By plate of monumental brass  
Dim-gleaming among weeds and grass,  
And sculptured Forms of Warriors brave :  
But chiefly by that single grave,  
That one sequestered hillock green,  
The pensive visitant is seen.  
There doth the gentle Creature lie  
With those adversities unmoved ;  
Calm spectacle, by earth and sky  
In their benignity approved !  
And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,  
Subdued by outrage and decay,  
Looks down upon her with a smile,  
A gracious smile, that seems to say—

♪ "Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,  
But Daughter of the Eternal Prime!"

The following is the full text of the first "note" to *The White Doe* in the quarto edition of 1815. The other notes to that edition are printed in this, at the foot of the pages where they occur:—

"The Poem of the 'White Doe of Rylstone' is founded on a local tradition, and on the Ballad in Percy's Collection, entitled 'The Rising of the North.' The tradition is as follows:—'About this time,' not long after the Dissolution, 'a White Doe, say the aged people of the neighbourhood, long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Churchyard during divine service; after the close of which she returned home as regularly as the rest of the congregation.'—DR WHITAKER'S *History of the Deanery of Craven*. Rylstone was the property and residence of the Nortons, distinguished in that ill-advised and unfortunate Insurrection, which led me to connect with this tradition the principal circumstances of their fate, as recorded in the Ballad which I have thought it proper to annex.

*The Rising in the North.*

"The subject of this ballad is the great Northern Insurrection in the 12th year of Elizabeth, 1569, which proved so fatal to Thomas Percy, the seventh Earl of Northumberland.

"There had not long before been a secret negotiation entered into between Mary Q. of Scots, at that time a prisoner in England, and the Duke of Norfolk, a nobleman of excellent character. This match was proposed to all the most considerable of the English nobility, and among the rest to the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, two noblemen very powerful in the North. As it seemed to promise a speedy and safe conclusion of the troubles in Scotland, with many advantages to the crown of England, they all consented to it, provided it should prove agreeable to Queen Elizabeth. The Earl of Leicester (Elizabeth's favourite) undertook to break the matter to her, but before he could find an opportunity, the affair had come to her ears by other hands, and she was thrown into a violent flame. The Duke of Norfolk, with several of his friends, was committed to the Tower, and summons were sent to the Northern Earls instantly to make their appearance at court. It is said that the Earl of Northumberland, who was a man of a mild and gentle nature,\* was deliberating with himself whether he should

---

\* Camden expressly says that he was violently attached to the Catholic Religion.

not obey the message, and rely upon the Queen's candour and clemency, when he was forced into desperate measures by a sudden report at midnight, Nov. 14, that a party of his enemies were come to seize his person. The Earl was then in his house at Topcliffe in Yorkshire. When, rising hastily out of bed, he withdrew to the Earl of Westmoreland at Brancepeth, where the country came in to them, and pressed them to take up arms in their own defence. They accordingly set up their standards, declaring their intent was to restore the ancient Religion, to get the succession of the crown firmly settled, and to prevent the destruction of the ancient nobility, &c. Their common banner (on which was displayed the cross, together with the five wounds of Christ) was borne by an ancient gentleman, Richard Norton, Esquire, who, with his sons (among whom, Christopher, Marmaduke, and Thomas, are expressly named by Camden), distinguished himself on this occasion. Having entered Durham, they tore the Bible, &c., and caused mass to be said there; they then marched on to Clifford-moor, near Whetherby, where they mustered their men. . . . The two Earls, who spent their large estates in hospitality, and were extremely beloved on that account, were masters of little ready money; the E. of Northumberland bringing with him only 8000 crowns, and the E. of Westmoreland nothing at all, for the subsistence of their forces, they were not able to march to London, as they had at first intended. In these circumstances, Westmoreland began so visibly to despond, that many of his men slunk away, though Northumberland still kept up his resolution, and was master of the field till December 13, when the Earl of Sussex, accompanied with Lord Hunsden and others, having marched out of York at the head of a large body of forces, and being followed by a still larger army under the command of Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick, the insurgents retreated northward towards the borders, and there dismissing their followers, made their escape into Scotland. Though this insurrection had been suppressed with so little bloodshed, the Earl of Sussex and Sir George Bowes, marshal of the army, put vast numbers to death by martial law, without any regular trial. The former of these caused at Durham sixty-three constables to be hanged at once. And the latter made his boast, that for sixty miles in length, and forty in breadth, betwixt Newcastle and Whetherby, there was hardly a town or village wherein he had not executed some of the inhabitants. This exceeds the cruelties practised in the West after Monmouth's rebellion.

“Such is the account collected from Stow, Speed, Camden, Guthrie, Carte, and Rapin; it agrees, in most particulars, with the following Ballad, apparently the production of some northern minstrel.—

“LISTEN, lively lordings all,  
Lithe and listen unto mee,  
And I will sing of a noble earle,  
The noblest earle in the north countrie.

Earle Percy is into his garden gone,  
And after him walks his fair leddie ;  
I heard a bird sing in mine ear,  
That I must either fight or flee.

Now heaven forfend, my dearest lord,  
That ever such harm should hap to thee :  
But goe to London to the court,  
And fair fall truth and honestie.

Now nay, now nay, my ladye gay,  
Alas ! thy counsell suits not mee ;  
Mine enemies prevail so fast,  
That at the court I may not bee.

O goe to the court yet, good my lord,  
And take thy gallant men with thee ;  
If any dare to do you wrong,  
Then your warrant they may bee.

Now nay, now nay, thou ladye faire,  
The court is full of subtiltie :  
And if I goe to the court, ladye,  
Never more I may thee see.

Yet goe to the court, my lord, she sayes  
And I myselfe will ryde wi' thee :  
At court then for my dearest lord,  
His faithful borrowe I will bee.

Now nay, now nay, my ladye deare ;  
Far lever had I lose my life,  
Than leave among my cruell foes  
My love in jeopardy and strife.

But come thou hither, my little foot-page,  
Come thou hither unto mee,  
To Maister Norton thou must goe  
In all the haste that ever may bee.

Commend me to that gentleman,  
And beare this letter here fro mee ;  
And say that earnestly I praye,  
He will ryde in my companie.

One while the little foot-page went,  
And another while he ran ;  
Untill he came to his journey's end,  
The little foot-page never blan.



When to that gentleman he came,  
Down he kneeled on his knee ;  
And took the letter betwixt his hands,  
And lett the gentleman it see.

And when the letter it was redd,  
Affore that goodlye companie,  
I wis if you the truthe wold know,  
There was many a weeping eye.

He sayd, Come thither, Christopher Norton,  
A gallant youth thou seem'st to bee ;  
What dost thou counsell me my sonne,  
Now that good earle's in jeopardy ?

Father, my counselle's fair and free ;  
That erle he is a noble lord,  
And whatsoever to him you hight,  
I would not have you breake your word.

Gramercy, Christopher, my sonne,  
Thy counsell well it liketh mee,  
And if we speed and 'scape with life,  
Well advanced shalt thou bee.

Come you hither, my nine good sonnes,  
Gallant men I trowe you bee :  
How many of you, my children deare,  
Will stand by that good erle and mee

Eight of them did answer make,  
Eight of them spake hastilie,  
O Father, till the day we dye  
We'll stand by that good erle and thee.

Gramercy, now, my children deare,  
You shew yourselves right bold and brave,  
And whethersoe'er I live or dye,  
A father's blessing you shall have.

But what say'st thou, O Francis Norton,  
Thou art mine eldest sonne and heire :  
Somewhat lies brooding in thy breast ;  
Whatever it bee, to mee declare.

Father, you are an aged man,  
Your head is white, your beard is gray ;  
It were a shame at these your years  
For you to ryse in such a fray.

Now fye upon thee, coward Francis,  
Thou never learned'st this of mee ;  
When thou wert young and tender of age,  
Why did I make soe much of thee ?

But, father, I will wend with you,  
Unarm'd and naked will I bee ;  
And he that strikes against the crowne,  
Ever an ill death may he dee.

Then rose that reverend gentleman,  
And with him came a goodlye band  
To join with the brave Earle Percy,  
And all the flower o' Northumberland.

With them the noble Nevill came,  
The erle of Westmoreland was hee ;  
At Wetherbye they mustered their host,  
Thirteen thousand fair to see.

Lord Westmorland his ancyeut raisde,  
The Dun Bull he rays'd on hye,  
And three Dogs with golden collars  
Were there set out most royallye.

Erle Percy there his ancyeut spread,  
The Half Moone shining all soe faire ;  
The Nortons ancyeut had the Crosse,  
And the five wounds our Lord did beare.

Then Sir George Bowes he straitwaye rose,  
After them some spoile to make :  
Those noble erles turned back againe,  
And aye they vowed that knight to take.

That baron he to his castle fled,  
To Barnard castle then fled hee.  
The uttermost walles were eathe to win,  
The earles have wonne them presentlie.

The uttermost walles were lime and bricke ;  
But though they won them soon anone,  
Long ere they wan their innermost walles,  
For they were cut in rocke and stone.

Then news unto leeve London came  
In all the speed that ever might bee,  
And word is brought to our royall queene  
Of the rysing in the North countrie.

Her grace she turned her round about,  
 And like a royall queene shee swore,  
 I will ordayne them such a breakfast,  
 As never was in the north before.

Shee caused thirty thousand men be rays'd,  
 With horse and harneis faire to see ;  
 Shee caused thirty thousand men be raised  
 To take the earles i' th' North countrie.

Wi' them the false Erle Warwicke went,  
 The Erle Sussex and the Lord Hunsden,  
 Untill they to York castle came  
 I wiss they never stint ne blan.

Now spred thy ancyent, Westmoreland,  
 Thy dun Bull faine would we spye :  
 And thou, the Erle of Northumberland,  
 Now rayse thy Halfe Moone on hye.

But the dun bulle is fled and gone,  
 And the halfe moone vanished away :  
 The Erles, though they were brave and bold,  
 Against soe many could not stay.

Thee, Norton, wi' thine eight good sonnes,  
 They doomed to dye, alas ! for ruth !  
 Thy reverend lockes thee could not save,  
 Nor them their faire and blooming youthe.

Wi' them full many a gallant wight  
 They cruellye bereav'd of life :  
 And many a child made fatherlesse,  
 And widowed many a tender wife.

“ ‘Bolton Priory,’ says Dr Whitaker in his excellent book—*The History and Antiquities of the Deanry of Craven*—‘stands upon a beautiful curvature of the Wharf, on a level sufficiently elevated to protect it from inundations, and low enough for every purpose of picturesque effect.

“ ‘Opposite to the East window of the Priory Church, the river washes the foot of a rock nearly perpendicular, and of the richest purple, where several of the mineral beds, which break out, instead of maintaining their usual inclination to the horizon, are twisted by some inconceivable process, into undulating and spiral lines. To the South all is soft and delicious ; the eye reposes upon a few rich pastures, a moderate reach of the river, sufficiently tranquil to form a mirror to the

sun, and the bounding hills beyond, neither too near nor too lofty to exclude, even in winter, any portion of his rays.

“But, after all, the glories of Bolton are on the North. Whatever the most fastidious taste could require to constitute a perfect landscape is not only found here, but in its proper place. In front, and immediately under the eye, is a smooth expanse of park-like enclosure, spotted with native elm, ash, &c. of the finest growth: on the right a skirting oak wood, with jutting points of grey rock; on the left a rising copse. Still forward are seen the aged groves of Bolton Park, the growth of centuries; and farther yet, the barren and rocky distances of Simon-seat and Barden Fell contrasted with the warmth, fertility, and luxuriant foliage of the valley below.

“About half a mile above Bolton the Valley closes, and either side of the Wharf is overhung by solemn woods, from which huge perpendicular masses of grey rock jut out at intervals.

“This sequestered scene was almost inaccessible till of late, that ridings have been cut on both sides of the River, and the most interesting points laid open by judicious thinnings in the woods. Here a tributary stream rushes from a waterfall, and bursts through a woody glen to mingle its waters with the Wharf: there the Wharf itself is nearly lost in a deep cleft in the rock, and next becomes a horned flood enclosing a woody island—sometimes it reposes for a moment, and then resumes its native character, lively, irregular, and impetuous.

“The cleft mentioned above is the tremendous STRID. This chasm, being incapable of receiving the winter floods, has formed, on either side, a broad strand of naked gritstone full of rock-basons, or “pots of the Linn,” which bear witness to the restless impetuosity of so many Northern torrents. But, if here Wharf is lost to the eye, it amply repays another sense by its deep and solemn roar, like “the Voice of the angry Spirit of the Waters,” heard far above and beneath, amidst the silence of the surrounding woods.

“The terminating object of the landscape is the remains of Barden Tower, interesting from their form and situation, and still more so from the recollections which they excite.”

---

*The White Doe* has been assigned chronologically to the year 1808; although part of it—probably the larger half—was written during the previous autumn, and it remained unfinished in 1810, while the dedication was not written till 1815. In the Fenwick note, Wordsworth tells us that it was begun at Stockton-on-Tees in the autumn of 1807, and “continued” at Dove Cottage, after his return to Grasmere, which was in April 1808. But on the 28th February, 1810, Dorothy Wordsworth, writing from Allan Bank to Lady Beaumont, says, “Before my brother turns to any other labour, I hope he will have finished three Books of the Recluse. He seldom writes less than 50 lines every day. After this task is finished he hopes to complete the ‘White Doe,’ and proud

should we all be if it should be honoured by a frontispiece from the pencil of Sir George Beaumont. Perhaps this is not impossible, if you come into the north next summer."

The frontispiece referred to was drawn by Sir George Beaumont for the quarto edition of 1815.

From the "advertisement" which Wordsworth prefixed to that edition, I infer that the larger part of the poem was written at Stockton. In the advertisement he says that "the poem of the White Doe was composed at the close of the year" (1807). In constructing the Chronological Table, I accepted this (his own) statement as to the date of the poem. It is, however, another illustration of the vague manner in which he was in the habit of assigning dates. The Fenwick note, and the evidence of his sister's letter, is conclusive; although the fact that *The Force of Prayer*—written in 1807—is called in the Fenwick note "an appendage to the 'White Doe,'" is farther confirmation of the belief that the principal part of the latter poem was finished in 1807. All things considered, it may be most conveniently placed after the poems belonging to the year 1807, and before those known to have been written in 1808; while *The Force of Prayer* naturally follows it.

*The White Doe of Rylstone*—first published in quarto in 1815—was scarcely altered in the editions of 1820, 1827, and 1832. In 1836, however, it was revised throughout, and in that year the text was virtually settled; the subsequent changes being few and insignificant, while those introduced in 1836 were numerous and important. A glance at the foot-notes will show that many passages were entirely rewritten in that year, and that a good many lines of the earlier text were altogether omitted. All the poems were subjected to minute revision in 1836; but few, if any, were more thoroughly recast, and improved, in that year than *The White Doe*. As a sample of the best kind of changes—where a new thought was added to the earlier text with admirable felicity—compare the lines in Canto VII., as it stood in 1815, when the Lady Emily first saw the White Doe at the old Hall of Rylstone, after her terrible losses and desolation—

Lone Sufferer ! will not she believe  
The promise in that speaking face,  
And take this gift of Heaven with grace ?

with the additional thought conveyed in the version of 1836—

Lone Sufferer ! will not she believe  
The promise in that speaking face ;  
And welcome as a gift of grace,  
The saddest thought the Creature brings ?

In the "Reminiscences" of Wordsworth—written by the Hon. Mr Justice Coleridge for the Bishop of Lincoln's *Memoirs* of his uncle—the following occurs. (See Vol. II. p. 311.) "His conversation was on critical subjects, arising out of his attempts to alter his poems. He said he

considered *The White Doe* as, in conception, the highest work he had ever produced. The mere physical action was all unsuccessful: but the true action of the poem was spiritual—the subduing of the will, and all inferior fancies, to the perfect purifying and spiritualizing of the intellectual nature; while the Doe, by connection with Emily, is raised as it were from its mere animal nature into something mysterious and saint-like. He said he should devote much labour to perfecting the execution of it in the mere business parts, in which, from anxiety ‘to get on’ with the more important parts, he was sensible that imperfections had crept in which gave the style a feebleness of character.”

From this conversation—which took place in 1836, but *before* the revision of the poem in that year—it will be seen that Wordsworth knew very well that there were feeble passages in the earlier editions of *The White Doe*; and that, in the thorough revision which he gave to all his poems in that year, this one was specially singled out for “much labour.” The result is seen by a glance at the changes of the text.

The notes appended to the edition of 1815 explain some of the historical and topographical allusions in the poem. To these the following may be added—

*Bolton's mouldering Priory.*

. . . . .  
 . . . . . *The tower*  
*Is standing with a voice of power,*

. . . . .  
*And in the shattered fabric's heart*  
*Remaineth one protected part ;*  
*A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,*  
*Closely embowered and trimly drest.*

(p. 104.)

In 1153, the canons of the Augustinian Priory at Embsay, near Skipton, were removed to Bolton, by William Fitz Duncan, and his wife, Cecilia de Romillé, who granted it by charter in exchange for the Manors of Skibdem and Stretton. The establishment at Bolton consisted of a prior and about 15 canons, over 200 persons (including servants and lay brethren) being supported at Bolton. During the Scottish raids of the fourteenth century, the prior and canons had frequently to retreat to Skipton for safety. In 1542 the site of the priory and demesnes were sold to Harry Clifford, first Earl of Cumberland. From the last Earl of Cumberland it passed to the second Earl of Cork, and then to the Devonshire family, to whom it still belongs. The following is part of the excellent account of the Priory, given in Murray's *Yorkshire*:—

“The chief relic of the Priory is the church, the nave of which after the Dissolution was retained as the chapel of this so-called ‘Saxon-Cure.’

This nave remains perfect, but the rest of the church is in complete ruin. The lower walls of the choir are Trans-Norman, and must have been built immediately after (if not before) the removal from Embsay. The upper walls and windows (the tracery of which is destroyed) are decorated. The nave is early English, and decorated; and the original west front remains with an elaborate Perpendicular front of excellent design, intended as the base of a western tower, which was never finished. . . . The nave (which has been restored under the direction of Crace)—the

“ ‘One protected part  
In the shattered fabric’s heart,’

is Early English on the south side, and Decorated on the north. . . . At the end of the nave aisle, enclosed by a Perpendicular screen, is a chantry, founded by the Mauleverers; and below it is the vault, in which, according to tradition, the Claphams of Beamsley and their ancestors the Mauleverers were interred upright—

“ ‘Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door;  
And through the chink in the fractured floor  
Look down, and see a grisely sight;  
A vault where the bodies are buried upright!  
There, face by face, and hand by hand,  
The Claphams and Mauleverers stand.’

Whitaker, however, could never see this ‘grisely sight’ through the chink in the floor; and it is perhaps altogether traditional. The ruined portion of the church is entirely Decorated, with the exception of the lower walls of the choir. The transepts had eastern aisles. The north transept is nearly perfect: the south retains only its western wall, in which are two decorated windows. The piers of a central tower remain; but at what period it was destroyed, or if it was ever completed, is uncertain. The choir is long and aisleless. Some fragments of tracery remain in the south window, which was a very fine one. Below the window runs a Transitional Norman arcade. Some portions of tomb-slabs remain in the choir. . . . The church-yard lies on the north side of the ruins. This has been made classic ground by Wordsworth’s poem.”

. . . . . *The folk*  
*Who sate in the shade of the Prior’s Oak.* (p. 105.)

The place where this Oak tree grew is uncertain. Whitaker says it stood “at a small distance from the great gateway.” This old entrance or gateway to the Abbey was through a part of Bolton Hall (now inhabited) under the Tower; and the old sexton at the Abbey tells me that the tree stood near that gateway, at some distance from the ruins of the Abbey.

*She sees a warrior carved in stone,  
Among the thick weeds stretched alone.* (p. 108.)

*It was a solitary mound.* (p. 110.)

These are not topographical allusions. At least no "warrior carved in stone" can now be seen amongst the ruins of Bolton Abbey, whatever may have been the case in 1807. There is no trace of Francis Norton's grave in the Abbey grounds.

*The shy recess  
Of Burden's lowly quietness.* (p. 116.)

Barden Tower is about two miles north-west of Bolton Priory, a little beyond the Strid. (See the poem *The Force of Prayer, or the Founding of Bolton Priory*.) Whitaker writes thus of the district of Upper Wharfedale at Barden. "Grey tower-like projections of rock, stained with the various hues of lichens, and hung with loose and streaming canopies of ling, start out at intervals." Before the restoration of Henry Clifford, "the Shepherd Lord,"—to the estates of his ancestors—on the accession of Henry VII.—there was only a keeper's lodge or tower at Barden—"one of six which existed in different parts of Barden Forest. The Shepherd Lord, whose early life among the Cumberland Fells led him to seek quiet and retirement after his restoration, preferred Barden to his greater castles, and enlarged (or rather rebuilt) it so as to provide accommodation for a moderate train of attendants."

*It was the time when England's Queen  
Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign dread ;  
But now the inly-working North  
Was ripe to send its thousands forth,  
A potent vassalage, to fight  
In Percy's and in Neville's right, &c.* (p. 119.)

The circumstances which led to *The Rising in the North*, and the chief incidents of that unfortunate episode in English history are traced in detail by Mr Froude, in the fifty-third chapter of his *History of England*. They are also summarized, in a lecture on the White Doe of Rylstone, by Principal Shairp, in his *Aspects of Poetry*, from which the following passage is an extract (pp. 346-8).

"The incidents on which the *White Doe* is founded belong to the year 1569, the twelfth of Queen Elizabeth.

"It is well known that as soon as Queen Mary of Scotland was imprisoned in England, she became the centre around which gathered all the intrigues which were then on foot, not only in England but throughout Catholic Europe, to dethrone the Protestant Queen Elizabeth. Abroad, the Catholic world was collecting all its strength to



crush the heretical island. The bigot Pope, Pius V., with the dark intriguer, Philip II. of Spain, and the savage Duke of Alva, were ready to pour their forces on the shores of England.

"At home, a secret negotiation for a marriage between Queen Mary and the Duke of Norfolk had received the approval of many of the chief English nobles. The Queen discovered the plot, threw Norfolk and some of his friends into the Tower, and summoned Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, immediately to appear at court. These two earls were known to be holding secret communications with Mary, and longing to see the old faith restored.

"On receiving the summons, Northumberland at once withdrew to Brancepeth Castle, a stronghold of the Earl of Westmoreland. Straightway all their vassals rose, and gathered round the two great earls. The whole of the North was in arms. A proclamation went forth that they intended to restore the ancient religion, to settle the succession to the crown, and to prevent the destruction of the old nobility. As they marched forward they were joined by all the strength of the Yorkshire dales, and, among others, by a gentleman of ancient name, Richard Norton, accompanied by eight brave sons. He came bearing the common banner, called the Banner of the Five Wounds, because on it was displayed the Cross with the five wounds of our Lord. The insurgents entered Durham, tore the Bible, caused mass to be said in the cathedral, and then set forward as for York. Changing their purpose on the way, they turned aside to lay siege to Barnard Castle, which was held by Sir George Bowes for the Queen. While they lingered there for eleven days, Sussex marched against them from York, and the earls, losing heart, retired towards the Border, and disbanded their forces, which were left to the vengeance of the enemy, while they themselves sought refuge in Scotland. Northumberland, after a confinement of several years in Loch Leven Castle, was betrayed by the Scots to the English, and put to death. Westmoreland died an exile in Flanders, the last of the ancient house of the Nevilles, earls of Westmoreland. Norton, with his eight sons, fell into the hands of Sussex, and all suffered death at York. It is the fate of this ancient family on which Wordsworth's poem is founded."

This statement as to the fate of Norton's sons, however, is not borne out by the historians. Mr Froude says (*History of England*, chap. 53), "Two sons of old Norton and two of his brothers, after long and close cross-questioning in the Tower, were tried and convicted at Westminster. Two of these Nortons were afterwards pardoned. Two, one of whom was Christopher, the poor youth who had been bewildered by the fair eyes of the Queen of Scots at Bolton, were put to death at Tyburn, with the usual cruelties."

*For we must fall, both we and ours—  
This Mansion and these pleasant bowers,  
Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead, hall—  
Our fate is theirs, will reach them all.*

(p. 126.)



Wilfred of Ripon, hung from a pole fixed in a four-wheeled car, which stood in the centre of the tent. 'I who wear no armour,' shouted the chief of the Galwegians, 'will go as far this day as any one with breast-plate of mail.' His men charged with wild shouts of 'Albin, Albin,' and were followed by the Norman knighthood of the Lowlands. The route, however, was complete; the fierce hordes dashed in vain against the close English ranks around the standard, and the whole army fled in confusion to Carlisle." (J. R. Green's *Short History of the English People*, p. 99.)

*A soft and lulling sound is heard  
Of streams inaudible by day.* (p. 144.)

Compare the lines in *The Excursion* (Despondency corrected)—

The little rills, and waters numberless,  
Inaudible by daylight.

and in *The Evening Walk*—

The song of mountain-streams, unheard by day,  
Now hardly heard, beguiles my homeward way,

as in the Sonnet—

The unremitting voice of mighty streams  
That wastes, so oft, we think, its tuneful powers.

Also Gray's *Tour in the Lakes*, "At distance heard the murmur of many waterfalls, not audible in the day-time."

*In Craven's wilds is many a den  
To shelter persecuted men,* (p. 150.)

In the limestone ridges and hills of the Craven district of Yorkshire, there are many caverns and underground recesses, such as the Yordas cave, referred to in *The Prelude*. (See Vol. III., p. 302.)

*Are now besieging Barnard's Towers,* (p. 150.)

The towers of Barnard Castle on the Tees in Yorkshire.

*High on a point of rugged ground  
Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell  
Above the loftiest ridge or mound  
Where foresters or shepherds dwell,  
An edifice of warlike frame  
Stands single—Norton Tower its name—  
It fronts all quarters, and looks round  
O'er path and road, and plain and dell,  
Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream  
Upon a prospect without bound.* (p. 152.)

The remains of Norton Tower—four bare, rectangular, roofless walls—are not on the highest point of Rylstone Fells, but on a ridge on the

western side of these Fells. It was, doubtless, originally built both for a watch-tower and a hunting-tower. "Some mounds near the tower are thought to have been used as butts for archers; and there are traces of a strong wall, running from the tower to the edge of a deep glen, whence a ditch runs to another ravine. This was once a pond, used by the Nortons for detaining the red deer within the township of Rylstone, which they asserted was not within the forest of Skipton, and consequently that the Cliffords had no right to hunt therein. The Cliffords eventually became lords of all the Norton lands here." From the old tower of Norton, looking towards Rylstone and Malham, to the north and north-west, the view is exactly as described in the poem. See Wordsworth's own note on Norton Tower.

*A hut, by tufted trees defended,  
Where Rylstone brook with Wharfe is blended.* (p. 175.)

There are two small streams which rise near Rylstone. One, called Rylstone beck, flows westwards into the Aire. Another makes its way eastwards towards the Wharfe, joins Linton beck, and so enters Wharfe between Linton Church and Grassington Bridge. It is to the latter that Wordsworth refers, although the former is now called Rylstone beck.

*Up to another cottage, hidden  
In the deep fork of Amerdale.* (p. 176.)

See Wordsworth's own note. The valley of Littondale once bore the name of Amerdale. Though the name is not now given to the beck, it survives singularly enough in one pool in the stream, where it joins the Wharfe, which is still called "Amerdale Dub." From this valley of Litton a small lateral one runs up in a south-westerly direction at Arncliffe, making a "deep fork," and is called *Dernbrook*. Dern means seclusion, and two or three miles up this ghyll is a farmhouse bearing the name of Dernbrook House.

*By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side.* (p. 176.)

See last note. "The phrase is so appropriate," says the present incumbent of Arncliffe, the Ven. Archdeacon Boyd, in a letter to the editor, "that it would almost seem that Wordsworth had been there." Mr Boyd adds, "In the illustrated edition of *The White Doe*, published by Longman a few years ago, there is an illustration by Birket Foster of the Dernbrook House, the original of which I had the honour to supply. It is but a short distance—two or three miles—from Malham Tarn."

*When the bells of Rylstone played  
Their Sabbath music, "GOD US AYDE,"  
That was the sound they seemed to speak,  
Inscriptive legend which I ween  
May on those holy bells be seen.* (p. 178.)

See Wordsworth's note. "A ring, bearing the same motto, was sold at a sale of antiquities from Bramhope Manor, Feb. 1865. The Norton Shield of Arms is in Rylstone Church."

*To look upon Saint Mary's shrine.* (p. 181.)

Archdeacon Boyd writes of this, "There never can have been a Lady Chapel in the usual place at Bolton, for the altar was close to the east window. I never heard of a Saint Mary's *Shrine*; but, most probably, the church was dedicated to S. Mary, in which case she" (the Lady Emily) "would be speaking of the building. In proof of this, the Priory of Embsay was dedicated to S. Mary; and naturally the dedication, on the removal from Embsay to Bolton, would be renewed. See Whitaker, p. 369, in extracting from the *compotus*, '*Comp. Monasterii be' Mar' de Boulton in Craven.*'" It may be added that the whole church being dedicated to S. Mary—as in the case of the Cistercian buildings—there would be no Lady Chapel. The mention in detail of "prostrate altars," "shrines defaced," "fret-work imagery," "plates of ornamental brass," and "sculptured forms of warriors" in the closing canto of *The White Doe* is—like the "one sequestered hillock green" where Francis Norton was supposed to "sleep in his last abode"—part of the imaginative drapery of the poem.

Wordsworth wrote thus, in January 1816, to his friend Archdeacon Wrangham, about *The White Doe* :—

"Of the 'White Doe' I have little to say, but that I hope it will be acceptable to the intelligent, for whom alone it is written. It starts from a high point of imagination, and comes round, through various wanderings of that faculty, to a still higher—nothing less than the apotheosis of the animal who gives the first of the two titles to the poem. And as the poem thus begins and ends with pure and lofty imagination, every motive and impetus that actuates the persons introduced is from the same source; a kindred spirit pervades, and is intended to harmonise the whole. Throughout objects (the banner, for instance) derive their influence, not from properties inherent in them, not from what they *are* actually in themselves, but from such as are *bestowed* upon them by the minds of those who are conversant with, or affected by, these objects. Thus the poetry, if there be any in the work, proceeds, as it ought to do, from the *soul of man*, communicating its creative energies to the images of the external world."

The following is from a letter to Southey in the same year :—"Do you know who reviewed 'The White Doe' in the 'Quarterly'? After having asserted that Mr W. uses his words without any regard to their sense, the writer says that on no other principle can he explain that Emily is *always* called 'the consecrated Emily.' Now, the name Emily occurs just fifteen times in the poem; and out of these fifteen, the epithet is attached to it *once*, and that for the express purpose of recalling the scene in which she had been consecrated by her brother's

solemn adjuration, that she would fulfil her destiny, and become a soul,

“‘By force of sorrows high  
Uplifted to the purest sky  
Of undisturbed mortality.’

The point upon which the whole moral interest of the piece hinges, when that speech is closed, occurs in this line,—

“‘He kissed the consecrated maid ;’

And to bring back this to the reader, I repeated the epithet.”

In a letter to Wordsworth about *The Waggoner* (see Vol. III. Appendix I.), Charles Lamb wrote in 1819, “I read ‘The White Doe of Rylstone ;’ the title should be always written at length. . . . Manning has just sent it home, and it came as fresh to me as the immortal creature it speaks of. M. sent it home with a note bearing this passage in it : ‘I cannot help writing to you while I am reading Wordsworth’s poem. . . .’Tis broad, noble, poetical, with a masterly scanning of human actions, absolutely above common readers.’”

The following is from Principal Shairp’s estimate of *The White Doe*, in his Oxford Lectures, *Aspects of Poetry* (chapter xii. pp. 373-376). “What is it that gives to it” (the poem) “its chief power and charm ? Is it not the imaginative use which the poet has made of the White Doe ? With her appearance the poem opens, with her re-appearance it closes. And the passages in which she is introduced are radiant with the purest light of poetry. A mere floating tradition she was, which the historian of Craven had preserved. How much does the poet bring out of how little ! It was a high stroke of genius to seize on this slight traditionary incident, and make it the organ of so much. What were the objects which he had to describe and blend into one harmonious whole ? They were these :

“1. The last expiring gleam of feudal chivalry, ending in the ruin of an ancient race, and the desolation of an ancestral home.

“2. The sole survivor, purified and exalted by the sufferings she had to undergo.

“3. The pathos of the decaying sanctities of Bolton, after wrong and outrage, abandoned to the healing of nature and time.

“4. Lastly, the beautiful scenery of pastoral Wharfedale, and of the fells around Bolton, which blend so well with these affecting memories.

“All these were before him—they had melted into his imagination, and waited to be woven into one harmonious creation. He takes the White Doe, and makes her the exponent, the symbol, the embodiment of them all. The one central aim—to represent the beatification of the heroine—how was this to be attained ? Had it been a drama, the poet would have made the heroine give forth in speeches, her hidden mind and character. But this was a romantic narrative. Was the poet to make her soliloquise, analyse her own feelings, lay bare her heart in

metaphysical monologue ? This might have been done by some modern poets, but it was not Wordsworth's way of exhibiting character, reflective though he was. When he analyses feelings they are generally his own, not those of his characters. To shadow forth that which is invisible, the sanctity of Emily's chastened soul, he lays hold of this sensible image—a creature, the purest, most innocent, most beautiful in the whole realm of nature—and makes her the vehicle in which he embodies the saintliness which is a thing invisible. It is the hardest of all tasks to make spiritual things sensuous, without degrading them. I know not where this difficulty has been more happily met ; for we are made to feel that, before the poem closes, the Doe has ceased to be a mere animal, or a physical creature at all, but in the light of the poet's imagination, has been transfigured into a heavenly apparition—a type of all that is pure, and affecting, and saintly. And not only the chastened soul of her mistress, but the beautiful Priory of Bolton, the whole Vale of Wharfe, and all the surrounding scenery, are illumined by the glory which she makes ; her presence irradiates them all with a beauty and an interest more than the eye discovers. Seen through her as an imaginative transparency, they become spiritualized ; in fact, she and they alike become the symbol and expression of the sentiment which pervades the poem—a sentiment broad and deep as the world. And yet, any one who visits these scenes, in a mellow autumnal day, will feel that she is no alien or adventitious image, imported by the caprice of the poet, but altogether native to the place, one which gathers up and concentrates all the undefined spirit and sentiment which lie spread around it. She both glorifies the scenery by her presence, and herself seems to be a natural growth of the scenery, so that it finds in her its most appropriate utterance. This power of imagination to divine and project the very corporeal image which suits and expresses the image of a scene, Wordsworth has many times shown. . . .

“And so the poem has no definite end, but passes off, as it were, into the illimitable. It rises out of the perturbations of time and transitory things, and, passing upward itself, takes our thoughts with it to calm places and eternal sunshine.”—ED.

## THE FORCE OF PRAYER ; \*

OR, THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY.

A TRADITION.

Comp. 1807. — Pub. 1815.

[An appendage to the “White Doe.” My friend, Mr Rogers, has also written on the subject. The story is preserved in Dr Whitaker's

---

\* See the White Doe of Rylstone.

History of Craven—a topographical writer of first-rate merit in all that concerns the past ; but such was his aversion from the modern spirit, as shown in the spread of manufactories in those districts of which he treats, that his readers are left entirely ignorant both of the progress of these arts and their real bearing upon the comfort, virtues, and happiness of the inhabitants. While wandering on foot through the fertile valleys and over the moorlands of the Apennine that divides Yorkshire from Lancashire, I used to be delighted with observing the number of substantial cottages that had sprung up on every side, each having its little plot of fertile ground won from the surrounding waste. A bright and warm fire, if needed, was always to be found in these dwellings. The father was at his loom ; the children looked healthy and happy. Is it not to be feared that the increase of mechanic power had done away with many of these blessings, and substituted many ills ? Alas ! if these evils grow, how are they to be checked, and where is the remedy to be found ? Political economy will not supply it ; that is certain ; we must look to something deeper, purer, and higher.]

“What is good for a bootless bene ?”

With these dark words begins my Tale ;  
And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring  
When Prayer is of no avail ?

“What is good for a bootless bene ?”

The Falconer to the Lady said ;  
And she made answer “ENDLESS SORROW !”  
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer’s words,  
And from the look of the Falconer’s eye ;  
And from the love which was in her soul  
For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden woods  
Is ranging high and low ;  
And holds a greyhound in a leash,  
To let slip upon buck or doe.



The pair have reached that fearful chasm,  
How tempting to bestride !  
For lordly Wharf is there pent in  
With rocks on either side.

This striding-place is called THE STRID,  
A name which it took of yore :  
A thousand years hath it borne that name,  
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,  
And what may now forbid  
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,  
Shall bound across THE STRID ?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he  
That the river was strong, and the rocks were steep ?—  
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,  
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,  
And strangled by a merciless force ;  
For never more was young Romilly seen  
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,  
And long, unspeaking, sorrow :  
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts  
A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the Lady wept  
A solace she might borrow  
From death, and from the passion of death ;—  
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day  
Which was to be to-morrow :  
Her hope was a further-looking hope,  
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,  
And proudly did its branches wave ;  
And the root of this delightful tree  
Was in her husband's grave !

Long, long in darkness did she sit,  
And her first words were, " Let there be  
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,  
A stately Priory !"

The stately Priory was reared ;  
And Wharf, as he moved along,  
To matins joined a mournful voice,  
Nor failed at even-song.

And the Lady prayed in heaviness  
That looked not for relief !  
But slowly did her succour come,  
And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart  
That shall lack a timely end,  
If but to God we turn, and ask  
Of Him to be our friend !

*The Force of Prayer* was included by Wordsworth amongst the "Poems proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." There were no variations in the text of the poem from 1815 to 1850 ; but I have found, in a letter of Dorothy Wordsworth's to her friend, Miss Jane Pollard, the mother of Lady Moateagie—who has kindly lent it to me—the earliest

version of the poem, which differs considerably from the form in which it was first published in 1815. The letter is dated October 18th, 1807. It is as follows :—

*"What is good for a bootless bene?"*

The Lady answer'd, "*endless sorrow.*"

*Her* words are plain ; but the Falconer's words  
Are a path that is dark to travel thorough.

These words I bring from the Banks of Wharf,  
Dark words to front an ancient tale :  
And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring  
When prayer is of no avail ?

*"What is good for a bootless bene?"*

The Falconer to the Lady said,  
And she made answer as ye have heard,  
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it from the Falconer's words  
And from the look of the Falconer's eye,  
And from the love that was in her heart  
For her youthful Romelli.

Young Romelli to the Woods is gone,  
And who doth on his steps attend ?  
He hath a greyhound in a leash,  
A chosen forest Friend.

And they have reach'd that famous Chasm  
Where he who dares may stride  
Across the River Wharf, pent in  
With rocks on either side.

And that striding place is call'd THE STRID,  
A name which it took of yore ;  
A thousand years hath it borne that name,  
And shall a thousand more.

And thither is young Romelli come ;  
And what may now forbid  
That He, perhaps for the hundredth time,  
Shall bound across the Strid ?

He sprang in glee ; for what cared he  
That the River was strong, and the Rocks were steep ?  
But the greyhound in the Leash hung back  
And check'd him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,  
And strangled with a merciless force ;  
For never more was young Romelli seen,  
Till he was a lifeless corse.

Now is there stillness in the vale  
And long unspeaking sorrow,  
Wharf has buried fonder hopes  
Than e'er were drown'd in Yarrow.\*

If for a Lover the Lady wept  
A comfort she might borrow  
From death, and from the passion of death ;  
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the Wedding-day  
That was to be to-morrow,†  
Her hope was a farther-looking hope  
And hers is a Mother's sorrow.

Oh was he not a comely tree ?  
And proudly did his branches wave ;  
And the Root of this delightful Tree  
Is in her Husband's grave.

Long, long in darkness did she sit,  
And her first word was, " Let there be  
At Bolton, in the Fields of Wharf  
A stately Priory.

And the stately Priory was rear'd,  
And Wharf as he moved along,  
To Matins joined a mournful voice,  
Nor fail'd at Even-song.

And the Lady pray'd in heaviness  
That wish'd not for relief ;  
But slowly did her succour come,  
And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart  
That shall lack a timely end,  
If but to God we turn, and ask  
Of him to be our Friend.

---

\* Alluding to a Ballad of Logan.

† From the same Ballad.

The poem of Samuel Rogers, to which Wordsworth refers in the Fenwick note, is named *The Boy of Egremont*. It begins—

“Say, what remains when Hope is fled?”  
She answered, “endless weeping !”

See Charles Lamb's remarks on *The Force of Prayer*, quoted in the Appendix to this volume.—ED.

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS ENGAGED IN  
WRITING A TRACT, OCCASIONED BY THE CONVEN-  
TION OF CINTRA.

Comp. 1808 — Pub. 1815.

NOT 'mid the World's vain objects that enslave<sup>1</sup>  
The free-born Soul—that World whose vaunted skill  
In selfish interest perverts the will,  
Whose factions lead astray the wise and brave—  
Not there ; but in dark wood and rocky cave,  
And hollow vale which foaming torrents fill  
With omnipresent murmur as they rave  
Down their steep beds, that never shall be still ;  
Here, mighty Nature ! in this school sublime  
I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering Spain ;  
For her consult the auguries of time,  
And through the human heart explore my way ;  
And look and listen—gathering, whence I may,<sup>2</sup>  
Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can restrain.

Wordsworth began to write on the Convention of Cintra in November 1808, and sent two articles on the subject to the December (1808) and January (1809) numbers of *The Courier*. The subject grew in importance to him as he discussed it : and he threw his reflections on the

<sup>1</sup> 1820.

. . . . . which enslave

1815.  
(See errata.)

<sup>2</sup> 1827.

. . . gathering where I may,

1815.

subject into the form of a small treatise, the preface to which was dated 20th May 1809. The full title of this (so-called) "Tract" is "Concerning the Relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal to each other, and to the common Enemy, at this crisis ; and specifically as affected by the Convention of Cintra : the whole brought to the test of those Principles, by which alone the Independence and Freedom of Nations can be Preserved or Recovered."—ED.

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME AND ON THE  
SAME OCCASION.

Comp. 1808. — Pub. 1815.

I DROPPED my pen ; and listened to the Wind  
That sang of trees up-torn and vessels tost—  
A midnight harmony ; and wholly lost  
To the general sense of men by chains confined  
Of business, care, or pleasure ; or resigned  
To timely sleep. Thought I, the impassioned strain,  
Which, without aid of numbers, I sustain,  
Like acceptance from the World will find.  
Yet some with apprehensive ear shall drink  
A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows past ;  
And to the attendant promise will give heed—  
The prophecy,—like that of this wild blast,  
Which, while it makes the heart with sadness shrink,  
Tells also of bright calms that shall succeed.

Compare the sonnet No. VII., of those "Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty," beginning—

Not 'mid the world's vain objects that enslave.

—ED.

GEORGE AND SARAH GREEN.

Comp. 1808. — Pub. 1839.

Who weeps for strangers ? Many wept  
 For George and Sarah Green ;  
 Wept for that pair's unhappy fate,  
 Whose grave may here be seen.<sup>1</sup>

By night, upon these stormy fells,<sup>2</sup>  
 Did wife and husband roam ;  
 Six little ones at home had left,  
 And could not find that home.<sup>3</sup>

For *any* dwelling-place of man  
 As vainly did they seek.  
 He perish'd ; and a voice was heard—  
 The widow's lonely shriek.<sup>4</sup>

Not many steps, and she was left <sup>5</sup>  
 A body without life—

<sup>1</sup> Wept for that Pair's unhappy end,  
 Whose Grave may here be seen.  
 MS. letter of Dorothy Wordsworth's.

<sup>2</sup> . . . these stormy Heights, MS.

<sup>3</sup> Six little ones the Pair had left,  
 And could not find their home. MS.

<sup>4</sup> Down the dark precipice he fell,  
 And she was left alone,  
 Not long to think of her children dear,  
 Not long to pray, or groan. Added in MS.

<sup>5</sup> A few wild steps—she too was left, MS.

A few short steps were the chain that bound<sup>1</sup>  
 The husband to the wife.<sup>2</sup>

Now do those<sup>3</sup> sternly-featured hills  
 Look gently on this grave ;  
 And quiet now are the depths of air,<sup>4</sup>  
 As a sea without a wave.

But deeper lies the heart of peace  
 In quiet more profound ;<sup>5</sup>  
 The heart of quietness is here  
 Within this churchyard bound.<sup>6</sup>

And from all agony of mind  
 It keeps them safe, and far  
 From fear and grief, and from all need  
 Of sun or guiding star.<sup>7</sup>

O darkness of the grave ! how deep,<sup>8</sup>  
 After that living night—  
 That last and dreary living one  
 Of sorrow and affright !

<sup>1</sup> The chain of but a few wild steps. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Four stanzas are here added in MS., only one of which need be given—

Our peace is of the immortal soul,  
 Our anguish is of clay ;  
 Such bounty is in Heaven : so pass  
 The bitterest pangs away.

<sup>3</sup> Now do the sternly-featured hills MS.

<sup>4</sup> And quiet now is the depth of air, MS.

<sup>5</sup> In shelter more profound. MS.

<sup>6</sup> Within this churchyard ground. MS.

<sup>7</sup> From fear, and from all need of hope  
 From sun or guiding star. MS.

<sup>8</sup> O darkness of the Grave ! how calm, MS.



O sacred marriage-bed of death,  
 That keeps them side by side <sup>1</sup>  
 In bond of peace, in bond of love,<sup>2</sup>  
 That may not be untied !

This poem is not included in any volume or collection of the works of Wordsworth. It was printed in De Quincey's "Recollections of Grasmere," which first appeared in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, September 1839, p. 573.

The text is printed as it is found in De Quincey's article. Doubtless Wordsworth, or some member of the family, had supplied him with a copy of these verses. Wordsworth himself seemed to have thought them unworthy of publication. A copy of the poem was transcribed at Grasmere by Dorothy Wordsworth for Lady Beaumont on the 20th April 1808. In this copy there are numerous variations from the text as published by De Quincey, and these are indicated in the ordinary way. I have, however, omitted three stanzas from the MS. copy, for the same reason that *The Convict* and the *Early Sonnet* in the *European Magazine* are not reproduced. In the letter to Lady Beaumont, Dorothy Wordsworth says, "I am going to transcribe a poem composed by my brother a few days after his return. It was begun in the churchyard when he was looking at the grave of the Husband and Wife, and is in fact supposed to be entirely composed there." Wordsworth returned to the old home at Dove Cottage, Grasmere, from a short visit to London, on the 6th April 1808 ; and there he remained, till Allan Bank was ready for occupation. I therefore conclude that this poem was written in April 1808.

Compare De Quincey's account of the disaster that befell the Greens, as reported in his *Early Recollections of Grasmere*. The Wordsworths had evidently taken part in the effort to raise subscriptions in behalf of the orphan children. The following is an extract from a letter of Dorothy Wordsworth's to Lady Beaumont on the subject :—

" GRASMERE, April 20th, 1808.

" We received your letter this morning, enclosing the half of a £5 note. I am happy to inform you that the orphans have been fixed under the care of very respectable people. The baby is with its sister—she who filled the Mother's place in the house during their two days of fearless solitude. It has clung to her ever since, and she has been its sole nurse. I went with two ladies of the Committee (in my sister's

1	That holds them side by side	MS.
2	In bond of love, in bond of God,	MS.

place, who was then confined to poor John's bedside) to conduct the family to their separate homes. The two Girls are together, as I have said ; two Boys at another Home ; and the third Boy by himself at the house of an elderly man who had a particular friendship for their father. The kind reception that the children met with was very affecting."—ED.

## 1809.

The poems belonging to the years 1809 and 1810 are mainly Sonnets ; although *The Excursion* was being added to at intervals. The twenty-four sonnets which follow—fourteen belonging to the year 1809, and ten to 1810—were included by Wordsworth, in the final arrangement of his poems, amongst those "Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty." It is difficult to ascertain the principle which guided him in determining the succession of these sonnets. They were not placed in chronological order ; nor is there any historical or topographical reason for their being arranged as they were. I have therefore departed from his order to a certain extent.

The six referring to the Tyrolese have been brought together in one group. Those containing allusions to Spain might have been similarly treated ; but the sonnets on Schill, the King of Sweden, and Napoleon—as arranged by Wordsworth himself—do not break the continuity of the series on Spain, in the same way that the insertion of those on Palafox and Zaragoza interferes with the unity of the Tyrolean group ; and the re-arrangement of the latter series enables me more conveniently to append to it a German translation of the sonnets, and a paper upon them by Alois Brandl.

## TYROLESE SONNETS.

### I.

HOFFER.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

OF mortal parents is the Hero born  
 By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led ?  
 Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead  
 Returned to animate an age forlorn ?

He comes like Phœbus through the gates of morn  
 When dreary darkness is discomfited,  
 Yet mark his modest state ! upon his head,  
 That simple crest, a heron's plume, is worn.  
 O Liberty ! they stagger at the shock  
 From van to rear—and with one mind would flee,  
 But half their host is buried :<sup>1</sup>—rock on rock  
 Descends :—beneath this godlike Warrior, see !  
 Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemock  
 The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

The expectation that the Germans would rise in 1807 against the French was realised only in the Tyrol. Andrew Hofer, an innkeeper in the Pässeierthal, was the chief of the Tyrolese leaders. More than once he called his countrymen to arms, and was successful for a time. The Bavarians, however, defeated him, in October 1809. He was tried by court-martial, and shot in 1810.—Ed.

## II.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

ADVANCE—come forth from thy Tyrolean ground,  
 Dear Liberty ! stern Nymph of soul untamed ;  
 Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the mountains named !  
 Through the long chain of Alps from mound to mound  
 And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo, bound ;  
 Like Echo, when the hunter train at dawn  
 Have roused her from her sleep : and forest-lawn,  
 Cliffs, woods and caves, her viewless steps resound  
 And babble of her pastime !—On, dread Power !  
 With such invisible motion speed thy flight,

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

The Murderers are aghast ; they strive to flee,  
 And half their Host is buried.

1815.

Through hanging clouds, from craggy height to height,  
 Through the green vales and through the herdsman's bower—  
 That all the Alps may gladden in thy night,  
 Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

## III.

## FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

THE Land we from our fathers had in trust,  
 And to our children will transmit, or die ;  
 This is our maxim, this our piety ;  
 And God and Nature say that it is just.  
 That which we *would* perform in arms—we must !  
 We read the dictate in the infant's eye ;  
 In the wife's smile ; and in the placid sky ;  
 And, at our feet, amid the silent dust  
 Of them that were before us.—Sing aloud  
 Old songs, the precious music of the heart !  
 Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the wind !  
 While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,  
 With weapons grasped in fearless hands, to assert <sup>1</sup>  
 Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

## IV.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

ALAS ! what boots the long laborious quest  
 Of moral prudence, sought through good and ill ;

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

With weapons in the fearless hand . . . 1815.

Or pains abstruse—to elevate the will,  
 And lead us on to that transcendent rest  
 Where every passion shall the sway attest  
 Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill ;  
 What is it but a vain and curious skill,  
 If sapient Germany must lie deprest,  
 Beneath the brutal sword ?—Her haughty Schools  
 Shall blush ; and may not we with sorrow say,  
 A few strong instincts and a few plain rules,  
 Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have wrought  
 More for mankind at this unhappy day  
 Than all the pride of intellect and thought ?

See the note by Alois Brandl appended to this series of sonnets. Wordsworth had probably no means of knowing anything of Fichte's "Addresses to the German Nation" delivered weekly in Berlin, from December 1807 to March 1808. (See *Fichte*, by Professor Robert Adamson, pp. 84-91.)—ED.

## V.

## ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE TYROLESE.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

It was a *moral* end for which they fought ;  
 Else how, when mighty Thrones were put to shame,  
 Could they, poor Shepherds, have preserved an aim,  
 A resolution, or enlivening thought ?  
 Nor hath that moral good been *vainly* sought ;  
 For in their magnanimity and fame  
 Powers have they left, an impulse, and a claim  
 Which neither can be overturned nor bought.  
 Sleep, Warriors, sleep ! among your hills repose !  
 We know that ye, beneath the stern control

Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquished soul :  
 And when, impatient of her guilt and woes,  
 Europe breaks forth : then, Shepherds ! shall ye rise  
 For perfect triumph o'er your Enemies.

## VI.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

THE martial courage of a day is vain,  
 An empty noise of death the battle's roar,  
 If vital hope be wanting to restore,  
 Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,  
 Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a strain  
 Of triumph, how the labouring Danube bore  
 A weight of hostile corse ; drenched with gore  
 Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped with slain.  
 Yet see (the mighty tumult overpast)  
 Austria a Daughter of her Throne hath sold !  
 And her Tyrolean Champion we behold  
 Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck cast,  
 Murdered without relief. Oh ! blind as bold,  
 To think that such assurance can stand fast !

I append to this series of sonnets on the Tyrol and the Tyrolese the translation of a paper contributed by Alois Brandl, a Tyrolean, to the *Neue Freie Presse* of October 22, 1880. Herr Brandl was for some time in England investigating the traces of a German literary influence on Coleridge, Wordsworth, and their contemporaries.

“ It was in the year 1809 ; Napoleon was at the height of his career of victory ; and England alone of all his opponents held the supremacy at sea. For years the English were the only representatives of freedom in Europe. At last it seemed that two fortunate allies arose to join their cause—the insurgents in Spain and in the little land of Tyrol. No wonder then that now British poets sympathised with the victors at the hill of Isel, and praised their courage and their leaders, and at last, when they

were overcome by superior forces, laid the laurel wreath of tragic heroism on their graves.

"Thirty or forty years before, English poets would scarcely have shown such a lively interest in a war of independence in a foreign country. They stood under the curse of narrow-mindedness and one-sidedness both in politics and in art, so that their smooth-running verses neither sought nor found a response even in the hearts of their own fellow-countrymen. The poets who appeared before the public in the year 1798 with the famous "Lyrical Ballads" were the first to strike out a new path. Although differing considerably from one another in other respects, they agreed in their opposition to the conventionality of the old school.

"Wordsworth lived in a simple little house on the romantic lake of Grasmere, in the heart of the mountains of Westmoreland. He studied more in his walks over heath and field than in books, and entered with interest into the questions affecting the good of the country people around him. All this of necessity impelled him to take a warm interest in the herdsmen of the Alps.

"But the Tyrolese inspired him with still greater interest on political grounds. Like all the lake poets, he was an enthusiastic admirer not of the French revolution but of the republic, as long as it seemed to desire the realization of the ideas of Liberty, Fraternity, Equality, and the rest of Rousseau's Arcadian notions; and it was a bitter disillusion for him, as well as for Klopstock, when this much-praised home of the free rights of man resolved itself into the empire of Napoleon. From this moment he took his place on the side of the enemies of France, and particularly on the side of the Tyrolese, since they had never lost the natural simplicity of their habits, and had regained the hereditary freedom, of which they had been deprived with the sword. Thus arose the curious paradox, that a republican poet glorified spontaneously the cause of an exceedingly monarchical and conservative country.

"Wordsworth gave vent to his enthusiasm in six sonnets, which, as far as power of language and vigour of thought are concerned, form interesting companion-pieces to the poems of the contemporary Tyrolese poet Alois Weissenbach. In the first three sonnets the splendour of the Alpine world, which he knew from his journeys in Switzerland, forms the background of the picture. In the foreground he sees a band of brave and daring men, in whose hearts he thought he could find all his own moral pathos. Many of the features which he has introduced certainly show more ideal fancy than knowledge of detail; but it was not his purpose to compose a correct report of the war, but to give an exciting description of the heroes of this struggle for independence, in order that, even though they themselves should be overpowered, their spirit might arise again among his own fellow-countrymen. In the fourth sonnet, in his enthusiasm for the Tyrolese, he has treated the

German universities with unnecessary severity ; but this does not prove any intentional want of fairness on his part, for at that time our universities stood under general discredit in England as the hotbeds of the wildest metaphysics and political dreams. The events of the year 1813 would probably induce Wordsworth to view them in a more favourable light. Similarly the sixth sonnet is not quite just to Austria ; in particular Wordsworth has made decidedly too little allowance for the fact that the Emperor Franz I. ceded the Tyrol quite against his own will under the pressure of circumstances. But in this case we must not simply impute all the blame to the poet ; for as we see from the diary of his friend Southey, his information as to the doings of Austria was of a most vague and unfavourable character. We, however, cannot have any wish to impute to Austria the sins of ill-advised diplomacy."

The following are Herr Brandl's German translations of Wordsworth's sonnets :—

## 1.

Andreas Hofer.

Von Sterblichen geboren sei der Held,  
Der den Tirolern todeskühn gebent?  
Ist etwa Tell's Geist aus der Ewigkeit  
Gefehrt, zu wecken die verlorn'e Welt?

Er kommt wie Phöbus aus dem Morgenzelt,  
Wenn sich die Finsterniß der Nacht zerstreut,  
Und doch, wie Schlicht! Ein Falkenschweif nur dreht,  
Von seinem Hut und füllt sein Wappenfeld.

O Freiheit! Wie der Feind erhebt in Rücken  
Und Front und gerne stöh' in einer Fluth,  
Wär' er nicht halb bedeckt von Felsenstücken,  
Gewälzt von dieses Kämpfers Göttermuth!  
Geeint sind Berg, Wald, Wildbach, zu erdrücken  
Hohnlachend den Tyrann und seine Wuth.

2.<sup>1</sup>

Freiheit, ersteig aus deinem Heimatsland  
Tirol! du Mädchen ernst und unzähmbar  
Und lieblich doch, der Berge Kind fürwahr!  
Ein Echo zwischen Fels und Alpenwand.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sonette 2, 4 und 6 sind unbetitelt.



Und über Gletschern bist du festgebannt;  
Ein Echo, das die Jagd im Morgengraun  
Vom Schlaf' aufscheucht, daß Berg und Wald und Au  
Und Höhle dröhnen, wo's unsichtbar stand.

Sein Spiel verkündend. So urplötzlich strahl',  
Du hehre Nacht, hervor im Siegeslauf  
Durch Volkentrost, von Klippenknauf zu Knauf,  
Durch Almenhütten, durch das grüne Thal;  
In dir dann jauchzen alle Alpen auf  
Hier, dort und überall mit einem Mal!

3.

Gefühle der Tiroler.

„Das Land ist uns vertraut vom Ahnengeschlecht:  
So sei's vererbt — und kost' es auch das Leben —  
Den Kindern: das ist Pflicht und fromm und eben;  
Natur und Gott, sie nennen es gerecht.

Wir müssen thun, was möglich, im Gefecht:  
Sieh' dies Gebot im Kindesauge leben,  
Von Frauenlippen, aus dem Aether schweben;  
Ihr Väter selbst aus Grabesmoder spricht

Es laut empor. — So kling' in Sangesbraus  
Der alten Lieder herzliche Musik!  
Einstimmen Hirt und Heerde in den Reihen!  
Ein opferwillig' Häuflein zieh'n wir aus,  
Die Waffen in den Händen, Muth im Blick,  
Der Jugend treu, die Menschheit zu befreien.“

4.

Was nützt, ach! langes sittenfluges Streiten,  
Das man aus „gut“ und „böse“ preßt mit Müh';  
Was dummer Fleiß, zu höh'n die Energie  
Und zu transcendentaler Ruh' zu leiten,

Daß jede Leidenschaft sich lasse reiten  
Von der Vernunft in Allsuprematie:  
Ist das nicht seltsam eitle Theorie,  
Wenn Deutschland trotz so viel Spitzfindigkeiten

Dem rohen Schwert erliegt? Erröthen sollen  
 Die hohen Schulen! Müssen wir nicht sagen:  
 Mehr wußten wenig Regeln, starkes Wollen  
 Durch schlichte Alpenhirten auszuführen  
 Für's Menschenwohl in diesen Unglückstagen,  
 Als alles stolze Metaphysiciren?

## 5.

Auf die schließliche Unterwerfung der Tiroler.

Ist einer guten Sache galt ihr Schlagen;  
 Wie hätten bei der Throne Niedersahrt  
 Sonst sie, die armen Schäfer, sich bewahrt  
 Begeistert den hohen Sinn und kräftig Wagen?

Auch hat ihr Kampf für's Gute Frucht getragen:  
 Weckt nicht ihr Ruhm, die große Denkart  
 Auch uns den Muth, mit Rechtegefühl gepaart,  
 Der nicht zu kaufen ist, nicht zu zernagen?

Schlaf, Kämpfer! Unter euren Bergen ruht!  
 Dem strengsten Richter kann es nicht entgehen:  
 Nie kannte euer Herz das Retiren.  
 Und bricht in höchster Pein und Nachemuth  
 Europa los, so sollt ihr auferstehen,  
 Ganz über euern Feind zu triumphiren!

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

AND is it among rude untutored Dales,  
 There, and there only, that the heart is true ?  
 And, rising to repel or to subdue,  
 Is it by rocks and woods that man prevails ?  
 Ah no ! though Nature's dread protection fails,  
 There is a bulwark in the soul. This knew  
 Iberian Burghers when the sword they drew  
 In Zaragoza, naked to the gales

Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth was felt  
 By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,  
 Like him of noble birth and noble mind ;  
 By ladies, meek-eyed women without fear ;  
 And wanderers of the street, to whom is dealt  
 The bread which without industry they find.

Palafox-y-Melzi, Don Joseph (1780-1847), immortalized by his heroic defence of Saragossa in 1808-9. He was of an old Arragon family, and entered the Spanish army at an early age. In 1808, when twenty-nine years of age, he was appointed governor of Saragossa, by the people of the town, who were menaced by the French armies. He defended it with a few men, against immense odds, and compelled the French to abandon the siege, after sixty-one days attack, and the loss of thousands. Saragossa, however, was too important to lose, and Marshals Mortier and Moncy renewed the siege with a large army. Palafox (twice defeated outside) retired to the fortress as before, where the men, women, and children fought in defence, till the city was almost a heap of ruins. Typhus attacked the garrison within, while the French army assailed it from without. Palafox, smitten by the fever, had to give up the command to another, who signed a capitulation next day. He was sent a prisoner to Vincennes, and kept there for nearly five years, till the restoration of Ferdinand VII., when he was sent back on a secret mission to Madrid. In 1814 he was appointed Captain-General of Arragon ; but for about thirty years—till his death in 1847—he took no part in public affairs.—Ed.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,  
 Dwells in the affections and the soul of man  
 A Godhead, like the universal PAN ;  
 But more exalted, with a brighter train :  
 And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,  
 Showered equally on city and on field,  
 And neither hope nor steadfast promise yield  
 In these usurping times of fear and pain ?

Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it, Heaven !  
We know the arduous strife, the eternal laws  
To which the triumph of all good is given,  
High sacrifice, and labour without pause,  
Even to the death :—else wherefore should the eye  
Of man converse with immortality ?

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

HAIL, Zaragoza ! If with unwet eye  
We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,  
Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold ;  
Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.  
These desolate remains are trophies high  
Of more than martial courage in the breast  
Of peaceful civic virtue : they attest  
Thy matchless worth to all posterity.  
Blood flowed before thy sight without remorse :  
Disease consumed thy vitals ; War upheaved  
The ground beneath thee with volcanic force :  
Dread trials ! yet encountered and sustained  
Till not a wreck of help or hope remained,  
And law was from necessity received.\*

See note to sonnet (p. 221). Saragossa surrendered February 20, 1809, after a heroic defence, which may recal the sieges of Numantia or Saguntum. Every street, almost every house, had been hotly contested ; the monks, and even the women, had taken a conspicuous share in the defence ; more than 40,000 bodies of both sexes and every age testified to the obstinate courage of the besieged. (See Dyer's *History of Modern Europe*, Vol. IV. p. 496.)—ED.

---

\* The beginning is imitated from an Italian sonnet. 1815.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

SAY, what is Honour ?—'Tis the finest sense  
 Of *justice* which the human mind can frame,  
 Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,  
 And guard the way of life from all offence  
 Suffered or done. When lawless violence  
 Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the scale <sup>1</sup>  
 Of perilous war her weightiest armies fail,  
 Honour is hopeful elevation,—whence  
 Glory, and triumph. Yet with politic skill  
 Endangered States may yield to terms unjust ;  
 Stoop their proud heads, but not unto the dust—  
 A Foe's most favourite purpose to fulfil :  
 Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust  
 Are forfeited ; but infamy doth kill.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

BRAVE Schill ! by death delivered, take thy flight  
 From Prussia's timid region. Go and rest  
 With heroes, 'mid the islands of the Blest,  
 Or in the fields of empyrean light.  
 A meteor wert thou crossing a dark night : <sup>2</sup>  
 Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and sublime,  
 Stand in the spacious firmament of time,  
 Fixed as a star : such glory is thy right.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

A kingdom doth assault, and in the scale

1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

A Meteor wert thou in a darksome night.

1815

Alas ! it may not be : for earthly fame  
 Is Fortune's frail dependant ; yet there lives  
 A Judge who, as man claims by merit, gives ;  
 To whose all-pondering mind a noble aim,  
 Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed ;  
 In whose pure sight all virtue doth succeed.

Ferdinand von Schill, a distinguished Prussian officer, born 1773, entered the army 1789, was seriously wounded in the battle of Jena, but took the field again at the head of a free corps. Indignant at the subjection of his country to Bonaparte, he resolved to make a great effort for the liberation of Germany, collected a small body of troops, and commenced operations on the Elbe ; but after a few successes was overpowered and slain at Stralsund, in May 1809.—Ed.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

CALL not the royal Swede unfortunate,  
 Who never did to Fortune bend the knee ;  
 Who slighted fear ; rejected steadfastly  
 Temptation ; and whose kingly name and state  
 Have perished by his choice, and not his fate !  
 Hence lives He, to his inner self endeared ;  
 And hence, wherever virtue is revered,  
 He sits a more exalted Potentate,  
 Throned in the hearts of men. Should Heaven ordain  
 That this great Servant of a righteous cause  
 Must still have sad or vexing thoughts to endure,  
 Yet may a sympathizing spirit pause,  
 Admonished by these truths, and quench all pain  
 In thankful joy and gratulation pure.

The royal Swede, "who never did to fortune bend the knee," was Gustavus IV. He abdicated in 1809, and came to London at the close of the year 1810. See note to another sonnet on the same King of Sweden, beginning—

The Voice of song from distant lands shall call.

(Vol. II. p. 294.)

In the edition of 1836, Wordsworth added the following note:—"In this, and a succeeding sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a Poet availing himself of the situation which the King of Sweden occupied, and of the principles *avowed in his manifestos* ; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths. This remark might, perhaps, as well have been suppressed ; for to those who may be in sympathy with the course of these Poems, it will be superfluous ; and will, I fear, be thrown away upon that other class, whose besotted admiration of the intoxicated despot, hereafter placed in contrast with him, is the most melancholy evidence of degradation in British feeling and intellect which the times have furnished."—ED.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

LOOK now on that Adventurer who hath paid  
 His vows to Fortune ; who, in cruel slight  
 Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,  
 Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was made  
 By the blind Goddess,—ruthless, undismayed ;  
 And so hath gained at length a prosperous height,  
 Round which the elements of worldly might  
 Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are laid.  
 O joyless power that stands by lawless force !  
 Curses are *his* dire portion, scorn, and hate,  
 Internal darkness and unquiet breath ;  
 And, if old judgments keep their sacred course,  
 Him from that height shall Heaven precipitate  
 By violent and ignominious death.

The "Adventurer" who "paid his vows to Fortune," in contrast to the royal Swede "who never did to Fortune bend the knee," was of course Napoleon Bonaparte.—ED.

Comp. 1809. — Pub. 1815.

Is there a power that can sustain and cheer  
 The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's doom,

IV.

P

Forced to descend into his destined tomb—<sup>1</sup>  
 A dungeon dark! where he must waste the year,  
 And lie cut off from all his heart holds dear;  
 What time his injured country is a stage  
 Whereon deliberate Valour and the rage  
 Of righteous Vengeance side by side appear,  
 Filling from morn to night the heroic scene  
 With deeds of hope and everlasting praise:—  
 Say can he think of this with mind serene  
 And silent fetters? Yes, if visions bright  
 Shine on his soul, reflected from the days  
 When he himself was tried in open light.

This may refer to Palafox, alluded to in a preceding sonnet (p. 221), and in the one next in order; although, from the latter sonnet, it would seem that Wordsworth did not know that Palafox was, in 1810, a prisoner at Vincennes.—ED.

## 1810.

As already indicated, the poems belonging to the year 1810, like those of 1809, were mainly Sonnets, suggested by the events occurring on the Continent of Europe, and the patriotic efforts of the Spaniards to resist Napoleon. I have assigned the two sonnets referring to Flaminius, entitled "On a Celebrated Event in Ancient History," to the same year. They were first published in 1815, and seem to have been due to the same impulse which led Wordsworth to write the "Sonnets dedicated to Liberty and Order."—ED.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

AH! where is Palafox? Nor tongue nor pen  
 Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave!  
 Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the wave?  
 Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Forced to descend alive into his tomb.

1815.



Of pitying human nature? Once again  
Methinks that we shall hail thee, Champion brave,  
Redeemed to baffle that imperial Slave,  
And through all Europe cheer desponding men  
With new-born hope. Unbounded is the might  
Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.  
Hark, how thy Country triumphs!—Smilingly  
The Eternal looks upon her sword that gleams,  
Like his own lightning, over mountains high,  
On rampart, and the banks of all her streams.

See note to sonnets (pp. 221-222).—ED.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

IN due observance of an ancient rite,  
The rude Biscayans, when their children lie  
Dead in the sinless time of infancy,  
Attire the peaceful corse in vestments white;  
And, in like sign of cloudless triumph bright,  
They bind the unoffending creature's brows  
With happy garlands of the pure white rose:  
Then do a festal company unite<sup>1</sup>  
In choral song; and, while the uplifted cross  
Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne  
Uncovered to his grave: 'tis closed,—her loss  
The Mother *then* mourns, as she needs must mourn;  
But soon, through Christian faith, is grief subdued;<sup>2</sup>  
And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1836. This done, a festal company unite 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1843. Uncovered to his grave:—Her piteous loss  
The lonesome Mother cannot choose but mourn;  
Yet soon by Christian faith is grief subdued, 1815.

<sup>3</sup> c. and 1843. And joy attends upon her fortitude. 1815.  
Or joy returns to brighten fortitude. 1836.

## FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN AT ONE OF THOSE FUNERALS.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

YET, yet, Biscayans ! we must meet our Foes  
With firmer soul, yet labour to regain  
Our ancient freedom ; else 'twere worse than vain  
To gather round the bier these festal shows.  
A garland fashioned of the pure white rose  
Becomes not one whose father is a slave :  
Oh, bear the infant covered to his grave !  
These venerable mountains now enclose  
A people sunk in apathy and fear.  
If this endure, farewell, for us, all good !  
The awful light of heavenly innocence  
Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier ;  
And guilt and shame, from which is no defence,  
Descend on all that issues from our blood.

## ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

A ROMAN Master stands on Grecian ground,  
And to the people at the Isthmian Games  
Assembled, He, by a herald's voice, proclaims <sup>1</sup>  
THE LIBERTY OF GREECE:—the words rebound  
Until all voices in one voice are drowned ;  
Glad acclamation by which air was rent !  
And birds, high flying in the element,

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

And to the Concourse of the Isthmian Games  
He, by his Herald's voice, aloud proclaims

1815.

Dropped to the earth, astonished at the sound !  
 Yet were the thoughtful grieved ; and still that voice  
 Haunts, with sad echoes, musing Fancy's ear :<sup>1</sup>  
 Ah ! that a *Conqueror's* words should be so dear :  
 Ah ! that a *boon* could shed such rapturous joys !  
 A gift of that which is not to be given  
 By all the blended powers of Earth and Heaven.

This "Roman Master" "on Grecian ground" was T. Quintus Flaminius, one of the ablest and noblest of the Roman Generals, (230-174 B.C.) He was successful against Philip of Macedon, overran Thessaly in 198, and conquered the Macedonian army in 197, defeating Philip at Cynoscephalæ. He concluded a peace with the vanquished. "In the spring of 196, the Roman commission arrived in Greece to arrange, conjointly with Flaminius, the affairs of the country : they also brought with them the terms on which a definite peace was to be concluded with Philip. . . The Ætolians exerted themselves to excite suspicions among the Greeks as to the sincerity of the Romans in their dealings with them. Flaminius, however, insisted upon immediate compliance with the terms of the peace. . . In this summer, the Isthmian games were celebrated at Corinth, and thousands from all parts of Greece flocked thither. Flaminius, accompanied by the ten commissioners, entered the assembly, and, at his command, a herald, in name of the Roman Senate, proclaimed the freedom and independence of Greece. The joy and enthusiasm at this unexpected declaration was beyond all description : the throngs of people that crowded around Flaminius to catch a sight of their liberator or touch his garment were so enormous, that even his life was endangered." (Smith's Dic. of Greek and Roman Biography : Art. Flaminius.)—Ed.

### UPON THE SAME EVENT.

Comp. (probably) 1810. — Pub. 1815.

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams of morn  
 The tidings passed of servitude repealed,  
 And of that joy which shook the Isthmian Field,  
 The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter scorn.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

—A melancholy Echo of that voice  
 Doth sometimes hang on musing Fancy's ear :

1815.

" 'Tis known," cried they, "that he who would adorn  
 His envied temples with the Isthmian crown,  
 Must either win, through effort of his own,  
 The prize, or be content to see it worn  
 By more deserving brows.—Yet so ye prop,  
 Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,  
 Your feeble spirits! Greece her head hath bowed,  
 As if the wreath of liberty thereon  
 Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud  
 Which, at Jove's will, descends on Pelion's top."

The Ætolians were the only Greeks that entertained suspicion of the Roman designs from the first. When Flaminius was wintering in Phocis in 196, and an insurrection broke out at Opus, some of the citizens had called in the aid of the Ætolians against the Macedonian garrison; but the gates of the city were not opened to admit the Ætolian volunteers till Flaminius arrived. Then in the battle at the heights of Cynoscephalæ, where the Macedonian army was routed, the Ætolian contingent, which had helped Flaminius, claimed the sole credit of the victory; and wished no truce made with Philip, as they were bent on the destruction of the Macedonian power. The Ætolians aimed subsequently at exciting suspicion against the sincerity of Flaminius. In the second sonnet, Wordsworth's sympathy seems to have been with the Ætolians, as much as it was with the Swiss and the Tyrolese in their attitude to Bonaparte. But Flaminius was not a Napoleon.—ED.

## THE OAK OF GUERNICA.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde in his account of Biscay, is a most venerable natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella, in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired to this tree, under which they swore to the Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges). What other interest belongs to it in the minds of this people will appear from the following

### SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME.

OAK of Guernica! Tree of holier power  
 Than that which in Dodona did enshrine

(So faith too fondly deemed) a voice divine  
 Heard from the depths of its ærial bower—  
 How canst thou flourish at this blighting hour?  
 What hope, what joy can sunshine bring to thee,  
 Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic sea,  
 The dews of morn, or April's tender shower?  
 Stroke merciful and welcome would that be  
 Which should extend thy branches on the ground,  
 If never more within their shady round  
 Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall meet,  
 Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,  
 Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

Prophetic power was believed to reside within the grove which surrounded the temple of Jupiter near Dodoua, in Epirus, and oracles were given forth from the boughs of the sacred oak.—ED.

## INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

WE can endure that He should waste our lands,  
 Despoil our temples, and by sword and flame  
 Return us to the dust from which we came ;  
 Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands :  
 And we can brook the thought that by his hands  
 Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,  
 For his delight, a solemn wilderness  
 Where all the brave lie dead. But, when of hands  
 Which he will break for us he dares to speak,  
 Of benefits, and of a future day  
 When our enlightened minds shall bless his sway ;  
*Then*, the strained heart of fortitude proves weak ;  
 Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks declare  
 That he has power to inflict what we lack strength to bear.

Compare the two sonnets "on a celebrated event in Ancient History" (p. 228). The following note to the last line of this sonnet occurs in Professor Reed's American Edition of the Poems:—"The student of English poetry will call to mind Cowley's impassioned expression of the indignation of a Briton under the depression of disasters somewhat similar.

"Let rather Roman come again,  
Or Saxon, Norman, or the Dane :  
In all the bonds we ever bore,  
We grieved, we sighed, we wept, *we never blushed before.*"

*Discourse on the Government of Oliver Cromwell.*—ED.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

AVAUNT all specious pliancy of mind  
In men of low degree, all smooth pretence !  
I better like a blunt indifference,  
And self-respecting slowness, disinclined  
To win me at first sight : and be there joined  
Patience and temperance with this high reserve,  
Honour that knows the path and will not swerve ;  
Affections, which, if put to proof, are kind ;  
And piety towards God. Such men of old  
Were England's native growth ; and, throughout Spain,  
(Thanks to high God) forests of such remain :<sup>1</sup>  
Then for that Country let our hopes be bold ;  
For matched with these shall policy prove vain,  
Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her gold.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

O'ERWEENING Statesmen have full long relied  
On fleets and armies, and external wealth :

<sup>1</sup> 1836

Forests of such do at this day remain.

But from *within* proceeds a Nation's health ;  
 Which shall not fail, though poor men cleave with pride  
 To the paternal floor ; or turn aside,  
 In the thronged city, from the walks of gain,  
 As being all unworthy to detain  
 A Soul by contemplation sanctified.  
 There are who cannot languish in this strife,  
 Spaniards of every rank, by whom the good  
 Of such high course was felt and understood ;  
 Who to their Country's cause have bound a life  
 Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given  
 To labour, and to prayer, to nature, and to heaven.\*

## THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERILLAS.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1815.

HUNGER, and sultry heat, and nipping blast  
 From bleak hill-top, and length of march by night  
 Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad height—  
 These hardships ill-sustained, these dangers past,  
 The roving Spanish Bands are reached at last,  
 Charged, and dispersed like foam : but as a flight  
 Of scattered quails by signs do reunite,  
 So these,—and, heard of once again, are chased  
 With combinations of long-practised art  
 And newly-kindled hope ; but they are fled—  
 Gone are they, viewless as the buried dead :  
 Where now ?—Their sword is at the Foeman's heart !  
 And thus from year to year his walk they thwart,  
 And hang like dreams around his guilty bed.

See note † appended to the sonnet entitled Spanish Guerillas (p. 247).  
 —ED.

---

\* See Laborde's character of the Spanish people ; from him the sentiment of these two last lines is taken. 1815.

## EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA.

[Those from Chiabrera were chiefly translated when Mr Coleridge was writing his "*Friend*," in which periodical my "Essay on Epitaphs," written about that time, was first published. For further notice of Chiabrera, in connection with his Epitaphs, see "*Musings at Aquapendente*."]

It is better to print all the Epitaphs from Chiabrera together, than to spread them out over the years when they were first published, since it is impossible to say in what year those written subsequently to 1810 were composed.—ED.

## I.

Pub. 1837.

WEEP not, belovèd Friends ! nor let the air  
 For me with sighs be troubled. Not from life  
 Have I been taken ; this is genuine life  
 And this alone—the life which now I live  
 In peace eternal ; where desire and joy  
 Together move in fellowship without end.—  
 Francesco Ceni willed that, after death,  
 His tombstone thus should speak for him.<sup>1</sup> And surely  
 Small cause there is for that fond wish of ours  
 Long to continue in this world ; a world  
 That keeps not faith, nor yet can point a hope  
 To good, whereof itself is destitute.

## II.

Pub. 1815.

PERHAPS some needful service of the State  
 Drew TITUS from the depths of studious bowers,

<sup>1</sup> 1846.

Francesco Ceni after death enjoined  
 That thus his tomb should speak for him.



And doomed him to contend in faithless courts,  
 Where gold determines between right and wrong.  
 Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,  
 And his pure native genius, lead him back  
 To wait upon the bright and gracious Muses,  
 Whom he had early loved. And not in vain  
 Such course he held! Bologna's learned schools  
 Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and hung  
 With fondness on those sweet Nestorian strains.  
 There pleasure crowned his days; and all his thoughts  
 A roseate fragrance breathed.\*—O human life,  
 That never art secure from dolorous change!  
 Behold a high injunction suddenly  
 To Arno's side hath brought him,<sup>1</sup> and he charmed  
 A Tuscan audience: but full soon was called  
 To the perpetual silence of the grave.  
 Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood  
 A Champion stedfast and invincible,  
 To quell the rage of literary War!

## III.

Pub. 1815.

O THOU who movest onward with a mind  
 Intent upon thy way, pause, though in haste!  
 'Twill be no fruitless moment. I was born  
 Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

To Arno's side conducts him, . . . 1815.

\* Ivi vivea giocondo ei suoi pensieri  
 Erano tutti rose.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer to his original. 1815.

On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate  
 To sacred studies ; and the Roman Shepherd  
 Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous flock.  
 Well did I watch,<sup>1</sup> much laboured, nor had power  
 To escape from many and strange indignities ;  
 Was smitten by the great ones of the world,  
 But did not fall ; for Virtue braves all shocks,  
 Upon herself resting immovably.  
 Me did a kindlier fortune then invite  
 To serve the glorious Henry, King of France,  
 And in his hands I saw a high reward  
 Stretched out for my acceptance,—but Death came.  
 Now, Reader, learn from this my fate, how false,  
 How treacherous to her promise, is the world ;  
 And trust in God—to whose eternal doom  
 Must bend the sceptred Potentates of earth.

## IV.

Pub. 1815.

THERE never breathed a man who, when his life  
 Was closing, might not of that life relate  
 Toils long and hard.—The warrior will report  
 Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in the field,  
 And blast of trumpets. He who hath been doomed  
 To bow his forehead in the courts of kings  
 Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,  
 Envy and heart-inquietude, derived  
 From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.  
 I, who on shipboard lived from earliest youth,  
 Could represent the countenance horrible

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Much did I watch . . . . .

1815.

Of the vexed waters, and the indignant rage  
 Of Auster and Boötes. Fifty years <sup>1</sup>  
 Over the well-steered galleys did I rule :—  
 From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars,  
 Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown ;  
 And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and oft :  
 Of every cloud which in the heavens might stir  
 I knew the force ; and hence the rough sea's pride  
 Availed not to my Vessel's overthrow.  
 What noble pomp and frequent have not I  
 On regal decks beheld ! yet in the end  
 I learned that one poor moment can suffice <sup>2</sup>  
 To equalise the lofty and the low.  
 We sail the sea of life—a *Calm* One finds,  
 And One a *Tempest*—and, the voyage o'er,  
 Death is the quiet haven of us all.  
 If more of my condition ye would know,  
 Savona was my birth-place, and I sprang  
 Of noble parents : seventy years and three <sup>3</sup>  
 Lived I—then yielded to a slow disease.

## V.

Pub. 1837.

TRUE is it that Ambrosio Salinero  
 With an untoward fate was long involved  
 In odious litigation ; and full long,  
 Fate harder still ! had he to endure assaults  
 Of racking malady. And true it is

<sup>1</sup> 1836.	. . . . .	Forty years	1815.
<sup>2</sup> 1832.	I learn . . . . .		1815.
<sup>3</sup> 1836.	. . . . .	sixty years and three	1815.

That not the less a frank courageous heart  
And buoyant spirit triumphed over pain ;  
And he was strong to follow in the steps  
Of the fair Muses. Not a covert path  
Leads to the dear Parnassian forest's shade,  
That might from him be hidden ; not a track  
Mounts to pellucid Hippocrene, but he  
Had traced its windings.—This Savona knows,  
Yet no sepulchral honors to her Son  
She paid, for in our age the heart is ruled  
Only by gold. And now a simple stone  
Inscribed with this memorial here is raised  
By his bereft, his lonely, Chiabrera.  
Think not, O Passenger ! who read'st the lines,  
That an exceeding love hath dazzled me ;  
No—he was One whose memory ought to spread  
Where'er Permessus bears an honoured name,  
And live as long as its pure stream shall flow.

## VI.

Pub. 1815.

DESTINED to war from very infancy  
Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took  
In Malta the white symbol of the Cross :  
Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun  
Hazard or toil ; among the sands was seen  
Of Libya ; and not seldom, on the banks  
Of wide Hungarian Danube, 'twas my lot  
To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.  
So lived I, and repined not at such fate :  
This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,  
That stripped of arms I to my end am brought  
On the soft down of my paternal home.

Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause  
To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor halt  
In thy appointed way, and bear in mind  
How fleeting and how frail is human life !

VII.

Pub. 1837.

O FLOWER of all that springs from gentle blood,  
And all that generous nurture breeds to make  
Youth amiable ; O friend so true of soul  
To fair Aglaia ; by what envy moved,  
Lelius ! has death cut short thy brilliant day  
In its sweet opening ? and what dire mishap  
Has from Savona torn her best delight ?  
For thee she mourns, nor e'er will cease to mourn ;  
And, should the out-pourings of her eyes suffice not  
For her heart's grief, she will entreat Sebeto  
Not to withhold his bounteous aid, Sebeto  
Who saw thee, on his margin, yield to death,  
In the chaste arms of thy belovèd Love !  
What profit riches ? what does youth avail ?  
Dust are our hopes ;—I, weeping bitterly,  
Penned these sad lines, nor can forbear to pray  
That every gentle Spirit hither led  
May read them, not without some bitter tears.

VIII.

Pub. 1815.

NOT without heavy grief of heart did He  
On whom the duty fell (for at that time  
The Father sojourned in a distant land)  
Deposit in the hollow of this tomb  
A brother's Child, most tenderly beloved !  
FRANCESCO was the name the Youth had borne,

POZZOBONNELLI his illustrious house ;  
 And, when beneath this stone the Corse was laid,  
 The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.  
 Alas ! the twentieth April of his life  
 Had scarcely flowered : and at this early time,  
 By genuine virtue he inspired a hope  
 That greatly cheered his country : to his kin  
 He promised comfort ; and the flattering thoughts  
 His friends had in their fondness entertained \*  
 He suffered not to languish or decay.  
 Now is there not good reason to break forth  
 Into a passionate lament ?—O Soul !  
 Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,  
 Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air ;  
 And round this earthly tomb let roses rise  
 An everlasting spring ! in memory  
 Of that delightful fragrance which was once  
 From thy mild manners quietly exhaled.

## IX.

Pub. 1815.

PAUSE, courteous Spirit !—Balbi supplicates  
 That Thou, with no reluctant voice, for him  
 Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst prefer  
 A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.  
 This to the dead by sacred right belongs ;  
 All else is nothing.—Did occasion suit  
 To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb  
 Would ill suffice : for Plato's lore sublime,  
 And all the wisdom of the Staggyrite,

---

\* In justice to the Author I subjoin the original—

. . . . . E degli amici  
 Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri. 1815.

Enriched and beautified his studious mind :  
 With Archimedes also he conversed  
 As with a chosen friend ; nor did he leave  
 Those laureat wreaths ungathered which the Nymphs  
 Twine near their loved Permessus.<sup>1</sup>—Finally,  
 Himself above each lower thought uplifting,  
 His ears he closed to listen to the songs <sup>2</sup>  
 Which Sion's Kings did consecrate of old ;  
 And his Permessus found on Lebanon.<sup>3</sup>  
 A blessèd Man ! who of protracted days  
 Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep ;  
 But truly did *He* live his life. Urbino,  
 Take pride in him !—O Passenger, farewell !

I have been unable to obtain any definite information in reference to the persons commemorated in these epitaphs by Chiabrera : Titus, Ambrosio Salinero, Roberto Dati, Francesco Pozzobonelli, and Balbi. Mr W. M. Rossetti writes that he "supposes all the men named by Chiabrera to be such as enjoyed a certain local and temporary reputation, which has hardly passed down to any sort of posterity, and certainly not to the ordinary English reader."

Chiabrera was born at Savona on the 8th of June 1552, and educated at Rome. He entered the service of Cardinal Cornaro, married in his 50th year, lived to the age of 85, and died October 14, 1637. His poetical faculty showed itself late. "Having commenced to read the Greek writers at home, he conceived a great admiration for Pindar, and strove successfully to imitate him. He was not less happy in catching the naïve and pleasant spirit of Anacreon ; his canzonetti being distinguished for their ease and elegance, while his *Lettere Famigliari* was the first attempt to introduce the poetical epistle into Italian Literature. He wrote also several epics, bucolics, and dramatic poems. His *Opere* appeared at Venice, in 6 vols., in 1768."

Wordsworth says of him, in his *Essay on Epitaphs* (see *The Friend*, February 22, 1810—where translations of some of those epitaphs of

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Twine on the top of Pindus. . . . 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1836.

. . . . the Song 1815.

<sup>3</sup> 1836.

And fixed his Pindus upon Lebanon. 1815.

Chiabrera first appeared—and notes to *The Excursion*)—"His life was long, and every part of it bore appropriate fruits. Urbino, his birth-place, might be proud of him, and the passenger who was entreated to pray for his soul has a wish breathed for his welfare. . . . The Epitaphs of Chiabrera are twenty-nine in number, and all of them, save two, upon men probably little known at this day in their own country, and scarcely at all beyond the limits of it; and the reader is generally made acquainted with the moral and intellectual excellence which distinguished them by a brief history of the course of their lives, or a selection of events and circumstances, and thus they are individualized; but in the two other instances, namely, in those of Tasso and Raphael, he enters into no particulars, but contents himself with four lines expressing one sentiment, upon the principle laid down in the former part of this discourse, when the subject of the epitaph is a man of prime note. . . ."

Compare the poem *Musings near Aquapendente*. In reference to the places referred to in these Epitaphs of Chiabrera, it may be mentioned that Savona (Epitaph v., vii., viii.) is a town in the Genovese Territory. Permessus (Epitaph v.) is a river of Bœotia, rising in Mount Helicon and flowing round it, hence sacred to the muses; the fountain of Hippocrene—also referred to in this epitaph—was not far distant. Sebeto (Epitaph iv.), now cape Faro, is a Sicilian-promontory.—Ed.

## MATERNAL GRIEF.

Comp. 1810. — Pub. 1842.

[This was in part an overflow from the Solitary's description of his own and his wife's feelings upon the decease of their children. (See "Excursion," book 3d.)]

DEPARTED Child ! I could forget thee once  
 Though at my bosom nursed ; this woeful gain  
 Thy dissolution brings, that in my soul  
 Is present and perpetually abides  
 A shadow, never, never to be displaced  
 By the returning substance, seen or touched,  
 Seen by mine eyes, or clasped in my embrace.  
 Absence and death how differ they ! and how  
 Shall I admit that nothing can restore



What one short sigh so easily removed ?—  
Death, life, and sleep, reality and thought,  
Assist me, God, their boundaries to know,  
O teach me calm submission to thy Will !

The Child she mourned had overstepped the pale  
Of Infancy, but still did breathe the air  
That sanctifies its confines, and partook  
Reflected beams of that celestial light  
To all the Little-ones on sinful earth  
Not unvouchsafed—a light that warmed and cheered  
Those several qualities of heart and mind  
Which, in her own blest nature, rooted deep,  
Daily before the Mother's watchful eye,  
And not hers only, their peculiar charms  
Unfolded,—beauty, for its present self,  
And for its promises to future years,  
With not unfrequent rapture fondly hailed.

Have you espied upon a dewy lawn  
A pair of Leverets each provoking each  
To a continuance of their fearless sport,  
Two separate Creatures in their several gifts  
Abounding, but so fashioned that, in all  
That Nature prompts them to display, their looks,  
Their starts of motion and their fits of rest,  
An undistinguishable style appears  
And character of gladness, as if Spring  
Lodged in their innocent bosoms, and the spirit  
Of the rejoicing morning were their own ?

Such union, in the lovely Girl maintained  
And her twin Brother, had the parent seen

Ere, pouncing like a ravenous bird of prey,  
Death in a moment parted them, and left  
The Mother, in her turns of anguish, worse  
Than desolate ; for oft-times from the sound  
Of the survivor's sweetest voice (dear child,  
He knew it not) and from his happiest looks  
Did she extract the food of self-reproach,  
As one that lived ungrateful for the stay  
By Heaven afforded to uphold her maimed  
And tottering spirit. And full oft the Boy,  
Now first acquainted with distress and grief,  
Shrunk from his Mother's presence, shunned with fear  
Her sad approach, and stole away to find,  
In his known haunts of joy where'er he might,  
A more congenial object. But, as time  
Softened her pangs and reconciled the child  
To what he saw, he gradually returned,  
Like a scared Bird encouraged to renew  
A broken intercourse ; and, while his eyes  
Were yet with pensive fear and gentle awe  
Turned upon her who bore him, she would stoop  
To imprint a kiss that lacked not power to spread  
Faint colour over both their pallid cheeks,  
And stilled his tremulous lip. Thus they were calmed  
And cheered ; and now together breathe fresh air  
In open fields ; and when the glare of day  
Is gone, and twilight to the Mother's wish  
Befriends the observance, readily they join  
In walks whose boundary is the lost One's grave,  
Which he with flowers had planted, finding there  
Amusement, where the Mother does not miss  
Dear consolation, kneeling on the turf  
In prayer, yet blending with that solemn rite  
Of pious faith the vanities of grief ;

For such, by pitying Angels and by Spirits  
 Transferred to regions upon which the clouds  
 Of our weak nature rest not, must be deemed  
 Those willing tears, and unforbidden sighs,  
 And all those tokens of a cherished sorrow,  
 Which, soothed and sweetened by the grace of Heaven  
 As now it is, seems to her own fond heart,  
 Immortal as the love that gave it being.

“That celestial light, &c.”

Compare the *Ode on Immortality* (p. 48). *Maternal Grief* was classed amongst the “Poems founded on the Affections.”—ED.

## 1811.

In the spring of 1811 Wordsworth left Allan Bank, to reside for two years in the Rectory, Grasmere. A small fragment on his daughter Catherine, the *Epistle to Sir George Beaumont, from the south-west coast of Cumberland*, and four Sonnets (mainly suggested by the events of the year in Spain) comprise all the poems belonging to 1811.—ED.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD.

Comp. 1811. — Pub. 1815.

[Written at Allanbank, Grasmere. Picture of my daughter, Catherine, who died the year after.]

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild;  
 And Innocence hath privilege in her  
 To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;  
 And feats of cunning; and the pretty round  
 Of trespasses, affected to provoke  
 Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.

And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,  
 Not less if unattended and alone  
 Than when both young and old sit gathered round  
 And take delight in its activity ;  
 Even so this happy Creature of herself  
 Is all-sufficient ; solitude to her  
 Is blithe society, who fills the air  
 With gladness and involuntary songs.  
 Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's  
 Forth-startled from the fern where she lay couched ;  
 Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir  
 Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-flowers,  
 Or from before it chasing wantonly  
 The many-coloured images imprest  
 Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

Classed amongst the "Poems referring to the period of Childhood."  
 —Ed.

### SPANISH GUERILLAS.

Comp. 1811. — Pub. 1815.

THEY seek, are sought ; to daily battle led,  
 Shrink not, though far outnumbered by their Foes,  
 For they have learned to open and to close  
 The ridges of grim war ; and at their head  
 Are captains such as erst their country bred  
 Or fostered, self-supported chiefs,—like those  
 Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose ;  
 Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian fled.  
 In One who lived unknown a shepherd's life  
 Redoubted Viriatus breathes again ;\*

---

\* Viriatus, for eight or fourteen years leader of the Lusitanians in the war with the Romans in the middle of the second century B.C. He defeated many of the Roman generals, including Pompey. Some of the historians say that he was originally a shepherd, and then a robber or guerilla chieftain. (See Livy, Books 52 and 54.)—Ed.

And Mina, nourished in the studious shade,\*  
 With that great Leader† vies, who, sick of strife  
 And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be laid  
 In some green island of the western main.

Comp. 1811. — Pub. 1815.

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,  
 Formal, and circumscribed in time and space;<sup>1</sup>  
 But who the limits of that power shall trace<sup>2</sup>  
 Which a brave People into light can bring  
 Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating  
 By just revenge inflamed? No foot may chase,<sup>3</sup>  
 No eye can follow, to a fatal place  
 That power, that spirit, whether on the wing

<sup>1</sup> 1827.	. . . . . time and place ;	1815.
<sup>2</sup> 1827.	. . . . . can trace	1815.
<sup>3</sup> 1827.	. . . . . can chase,	1815.

---

\* “Whilst the chief force of the French was occupied in Portugal and Andalusia, and there remained in the interior of Spain only a few weak corps, the Guerilla system took deep root, and in the course of 1811 attained its greatest perfection. Left to itself the boldest and most enterprising of its members rose to command, and the mode of warfare best adapted to their force and habits was pursued. Each province boasted of a hero, in command of a formidable band—Old Castile, Don Julian Sanches ; Arragon, Longa ; Navarre, Esprez y Mina, . . . with innumerable others, whose deeds spread a lustre over every part of the kingdom. . . . Mina and Longa headed armies of 6 or 8000 men with distinguished ability, and displayed manœuvres oftentimes for months together, in baffling the pursuit of more numerous bodies of French, which would reflect credit on the most celebrated commanders.” (See *Account of the War in Spain and Portugal, and in the south of France, from 1808 to 1814 inclusive*, by Lieut.-Colonel John T. Jones. London, 1818.) —Ed.

† Sertorius. See note to *The Prelude*, Book I., Vol. III. p. 134.—Ed.

Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind  
 Within its awful caves.—From year to year  
 Springs this indigenous produce far and near ;  
 No craft this subtile element can bind,  
 Rising like water from the soil, to find  
 In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

Comp. 1811. — 1815.

HERE pause : the poet claims at least this praise,  
 That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope  
 Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope  
 In the worst moment of these evil days ;  
 From hope, the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays,  
 For its own honour, on man's suffering heart.  
 Never may from our souls one truth depart—  
 That an accursed thing it is to gaze  
 On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye ;  
 Nor—touched with due abhorrence of *their* guilt  
 For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is spilt,  
 And justice labours in extremity—  
 Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,  
 O wretched man, the throne of tyranny !

## EPISTLE

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

FROM THE SOUTH-WEST COAST OF CUMBERLAND.

Comp. 1811. — Pub. 1842.

[This poem opened, when first written, with a paragraph that has been transferred as an introduction to the first series of my Scotch Memorials. The journey, of which the first part is here described, was from Grasmere to Bootle on the south-west coast of Cumberland, the whole among mountain roads through a beautiful country ; and we

had fine weather. The verses end with our breakfast at the head of Yewdale in a yeoman's house, which, like all the other property in that sequestered vale, has passed or is passing into the hands of Mr James Marshall of Monk Coniston—in Mr Knott's, the late owner's, time called Waterhead. Our hostess married a Mr Oldfield, a lieutenant in the Navy. They lived together for some time at Hacket, where she still resides as his widow. It was in front of that house, on the mountain side, near which stood the peasant who, while we were passing at a distance, saluted us, waving a kerchief in her hand as described in the poem. (This matron and her husband were then residing at the Hacket. The house and its inmates are referred to in the fifth book of the "Excursion," in the passage beginning—

You behold,  
High on the breast of yon dark mountain, dark  
With stony barrenness, a shining speck"—J.C.)

The dog which we met with soon after our starting belonged to Mr Rowlandson, who for forty years was curate of Grasmere in place of the rector who lived to extreme old age in a state of insanity. Of this Mr R. much might be said, both with reference to his character, and the way in which he was regarded by his parishioners. He was a man of a robust frame, had a firm voice and authoritative manner, of strong natural talents, of which he was himself conscious, for he has been heard to say (it grieves me to add) with an oath—"If I had been brought up at college I should have been a bishop." Two vices used to struggle in him for mastery, avarice and the love of strong drink; but, avarice, as is common in like cases, always got the better of its opponent; for, though he was often intoxicated, it was never I believe at his own expense. As has been said of one in a more exalted station, he would take any *given* quantity. I have heard a story of him which is worth the telling. One summer's morning, our Grasmere curate, after a night's carouse in the vale of Langdale, on his return home, having reached a point near which the whole of the vale of Grasmere might be seen with the lake immediately below him, stepped aside and sat down on the turf. After looking for some time at the landscape, then in the perfection of its morning beauty, he exclaimed—"Good God, that I should have led so long such a life in such a place!" This no doubt was deeply felt by him at the time, but I am not authorised to say that any noticeable amendment followed. Penuriousness strengthened upon him as his body grew feeble with age. He had purchased property and kept some land in his own hands, but he could not find in his heart to lay out the necessary hire for labourers at the proper season, and consequently he has often been seen in half-dotage working his hay in the month of November by moonlight, a melancholy sight which I myself have witnessed. Notwithstanding all

that has been said, this man, on account of his talents and superior education, was looked up to by his parishioners, who without a single exception lived at that time (and most of them upon their own small inheritances) in a state of republican equality, a condition favourable to the growth of kindly feelings among them, and in a striking degree exclusive to temptations to gross vice and scandalous behaviour. As a pastor their curate did little or nothing for them ; but what could more strikingly set forth the efficacy of the Church of England through its Ordinances and Liturgy than that, in spite of the unworthiness of the minister, his church was regularly attended ; and, though there was not much appearance in the flock of what might be called animated piety, intoxication was rare, and dissolute morals unknown. With the Bible they were for the most part well acquainted ; and, as was strikingly shown when they were under affliction, must have been supported and comforted by habitual belief in those truths which it is the aim of the Church to inculcate. *Loughrigg Tarn*.—This beautiful pool and the surrounding scene are minutely described in my little Book on the Lakes. Sir G. H. Beaumont, in the earlier part of his life, was induced, by his love of nature and the art of painting, to take up his abode at Old Brathay, about three miles from this spot, so that he must have seen it under many aspects ; and he was so much pleased with it that he purchased the Tarn with a view to build, near it, such a residence as is alluded to in this Epistle. Baronets and knights were not so common in that day as now, and Sir Michael le Fleming, not liking to have a rival in that kind of distinction so near him, claimed a sort of Lordship over the territory, and showed dispositions little in unison with those of Sir G. Beaumont, who was eminently a lover of peace. The project of building was in consequence given up, Sir George retaining possession of the Tarn. Many years afterwards a Kendal tradesman born upon its banks applied to me for the purchase of it, and accordingly it was sold for the sum that had been given for it, and the money was laid out under my direction upon a substantial oak fence for a certain number of yew trees to be planted in Grasmere church-yard ; two were planted in each enclosure, with a view to remove, after a certain time, the one which throve least. After several years, the stouter plant being left, the others were taken up and placed in other parts of the same church-yard, and were adequately fenced at the expense and under the care of the late Mr Barber, Mr Greenwood, and myself : the whole eight are now thriving, and are already an ornament to a place which, during late years has lost much of its rustic simplicity by the introduction of iron palisades to fence off family burying-grounds, and by numerous monuments, some of them in very bad taste ; from which this place of burial was in my memory quite free. See the lines in the sixth book of the “Excursion” beginning—“Green is the church-yard, beautiful and



green." The Epistle to which these notes refer, though written so far back as 1804, was carefully revised so late as 1842, previous to its publication. I am loth to add, that it was never seen by the person to whom it is addressed. So sensible am I of the deficiencies in all that I write, and so far does everything I attempt fall short of what I wish it to be, that even private publication, if such a term may be allowed, requires more resolution than I can command. I have written to give vent to my own mind, and not without hope that, some time or other, kindred minds might benefit by my labours : but I am inclined to believe I should never have ventured to send forth any verses of mine to the world if it had not been done on the pressure of personal occasions. Had I been a rich man, my productions, like this "Epistle," the tragedy of the "Borderers," &c., would most likely have been confined to manuscript.]

FAR from our home by Grasmere's quiet Lake,  
From the Vale's peace which all her fields partake,  
Here on the bleakest point of Cumbria's shore  
We sojourn stunned by Ocean's ceaseless roar ;  
While, day by day, grim neighbour ! huge Black Comb  
Frowns deepening visibly his native gloom,  
Unless, perchance rejecting in despite  
What on the Plain *we* have of warmth and light,  
In his own storms he hides himself from sight.  
Rough is the time ; and thoughts, that would be free  
From heaviness, oft fly, dear Friend, to thee ;  
Turn from a spot where neither sheltered road  
Nor hedge-row screen invites my steps abroad ;  
Where one poor Plane-tree, having as it might  
Attained a stature twice a tall man's height,  
Hopeless of further growth, and brown and sere  
Through half the summer, stands with top cut sheer,  
Like an unshifting weathercock which proves  
How cold the quarter that the wind best loves,  
Or like a Centinel that, evermore  
Darkening the window, ill defends the door  
Of this unfinished house—a Fortress bare,  
Where strength has been the Builder's only care ;

Whose rugged walls may still for years demand  
The final polish of the Plasterer's hand.  
—This Dwelling's Inmate more than three weeks' space  
And oft a Prisoner in the cheerless place,  
I—of whose touch the fiddle would complain,  
Whose breath would labour at the flute in vain,  
In music all unversed, nor blessed with skill  
A bridge to copy, or to paint a mill,  
Tired of my books, a scanty company!  
And tired of listening to the boisterous sea—  
Pace between door and window muttering rhyme,  
An old resource to cheat a froward time!  
Though these dull hours (mine is it, or their shame?)  
Would tempt me to renounce that humble aim.  
—But if there be a Muse who, free to take  
Her seat upon Olympus, doth forsake  
Those heights (like Phœbus when his golden locks  
He veiled, attendant on Thessalian flocks)  
And, in disguise, a Milkmaid with her pail  
Trips down the pathways of some winding dale;  
Or, like a Mermaid, warbles on the shores  
To fishers mending nets beside their doors;  
Or, Pilgrim-like, on forest moss reclined,  
Gives plaintive ditties to the heedless wind,  
Or listens to its play among the boughs  
Above her head and so forgets her vows—  
If such a Visitant of Earth there be  
And she would deign this day to smile on me  
And aid my verse, content with local bounds  
Of natural beauty and life's daily rounds,  
Thoughts, chances, sights, or doings, which we tell  
Without reserve to those whom we love well—  
Then haply, Beaumont! words in current clear  
Will flow, and on a welcome page appear  
Duly before thy sight, unless they perish here.

What shall I treat of? News from Mona's Isle?  
Such have we, but unvaried in its style;  
No tales of Runagates fresh landed, whence  
And wherefore fugitive or on what pretence;  
Of feasts, or scandal, eddying like the wind  
Most restlessly alive when most confined.  
Ask not of me, whose tongue can best appease  
The mighty tumults of the HOUSE OF KEYS;  
The last year's cup whose Ram or Heifer gained,  
What slopes are planted, or what mosses drained:  
An eye of fancy only can I cast  
On that proud pageant now at hand or past,  
When full five hundred boats in trim array,  
With nets and sails outspread and streamers gay,  
And chanted hymns and stiller voice of prayer,  
For the old Manx-harvest to the Deep repair,  
Soon as the herring-shoals at distance shine  
Like beds of moonlight shifting on the brine.

Mona from our Abode is daily seen,  
But with a wilderness of waves between;  
And by conjecture only can we speak  
Of aught transacted there in bay or creek;  
No tidings reach us thence from town or field,  
Only faint news her mountain sunbeams yield,  
And some we gather from the misty air,  
And some the hovering clouds, our telegraph, declare.  
But these poetic mysteries I withhold;  
For Fancy hath her fits both hot and cold,  
And should the colder fit with You be on  
When You might read, my credit would be gone.

Let more substantial themes the pen engage,  
And nearer interests culled from the opening stage

Of our migration.—Ere the welcome dawn  
Had from the east her silver star withdrawn,  
The Wain stood ready, at our Cottage-door,  
Thoughtfully freighted with a various store ;  
And long or e'er the uprising of the Sun  
O'er dew-damped dust our journey was begun,  
A needful journey, under favouring skies,  
Through peopled Vales ; yet something in the guise  
Of those old Patriarchs when from well to well  
They roamed through Wastes where now the tented  
Arabs dwell.

Say first, to whom did we the charge confide,  
Who promptly undertook the Wain to guide  
Up many a sharply-twining road and down,  
And over many a wide hill's craggy crown,  
Through the quick turns of many a hollow nook,  
And the rough bed of many an unbridged brook ;  
A blooming Lass—who in her better hand  
Bore a light switch, her sceptre of command  
When, yet a slender Girl, she often led,  
Skilful and bold, the horse and burthened *sled*,\*  
From the peat-yielding Moss on Gowdar's head.  
What could go wrong with such a Charioteer  
For goods and chattels, or those Infants dear,  
A Pair who smilingly sate side by side,  
Our hope confirming that the salt-sea tide,  
Whose free embraces we were bound to seek,  
Would their lost strength restore and freshen the pale  
cheek ?  
Such hope did either Parent entertain  
Pacing behind along the silent lane.

---

\* A local word for Sledge.

Blithe hopes and happy musings soon took flight,  
For lo ! an uncouth melancholy sight—  
On a green bank a creature stood forlorn  
Just half protruded to the light of morn,  
Its hinder part concealed by hedge-row thorn.  
The Figure called to mind a beast of prey  
Stript of its frightful powers by slow decay,  
And, though no longer upon rapine bent,  
Dim memory keeping of its old intent.  
We started, looked again with anxious eyes,  
And in that griesly object recognised  
The Curate's Dog—his long-tried friend, for they,  
As well we knew, together had grown grey.  
The Master died, his drooping servant's grief  
Found at the Widow's feet some sad relief ;<sup>1</sup>  
Yet still he lived in pining discontent,  
Sadness which no indulgence could prevent ;  
Hence whole day wanderings, broken nightly sleeps  
And lonesome watch that out of doors he keeps ;  
Not oftentimes, I trust, as we, poor brute !  
Espied him on his legs sustained, blank, mute,  
And of all visible motion destitute,  
So that the very heaving of his breath  
Seemed stopt, though by some other power than death.  
Long as we gazed upon the form and face,  
A mild domestic pity kept its place,  
Unscared by thronging fancies of strange hue  
That haunted us in spite of what we knew.

<sup>1</sup> Inserted in edition 1842.

Until the vale she quitted, and this door  
Was closed, to which she will return no more ;  
But first old Faithful to the neighbour's care  
Was given in charge ; nor lacked he dainty fare,  
And in the Chimney Nook was free to lie  
And doze, or, if his turn was come, to die.

Even now I sometimes think of him as lost  
In second-sight appearances, or crost  
By spectral shapes of guilt, or to the ground,  
On which he stood, by spells unnatural bound,  
Like a gaunt shaggy Porter forced to wait  
In days of old romance at Archimago's gate.

Advancing Summer, Nature's law fulfilled,  
The choristers in every grove had stilled ;  
But we, we lacked not music of our own,  
For lightsome Fanny had thus early thrown,  
Mid the gay prattle of those infant tongues,  
Some notes prelusive, from the round of songs  
With which, more zealous than the liveliest bird  
That in wild Arden's brakes was ever heard,  
Her work and her work's partners she can cheer,  
The whole day long, and all days of the year.

Thus gladdened from our own dear vale we pass  
And soon approach Diana's Looking-glass !  
To Loughrigg-tarn, round clear and bright as heaven,  
Such name Italian fancy would have given,  
Ere on its banks the few grey cabins rose  
That yet disturbed not its concealed repose  
More than the feeblest wind that idly blows.

Áh, Beaumont ! when an opening in the road  
Stopped me at once by charm of what it showed,  
The encircling region vividly exprest  
Within the mirror's depth, a world at rest—  
Sky streaked with purple, grove and craggy *bield*,\*  
And the smooth green of many a pendent field,

---

\* A word common in the country, signifying shelter, as in Scotland.

And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,  
A little daring would-be waterfall,  
One chimney smoking and its azure wreath,  
Associate all in the calm Pool beneath,  
With here and there a faint imperfect gleam  
Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam—  
What wonder at this hour of stillness deep,  
A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and sleep,  
When Nature's self, amid such blending, seems  
To render visible her own soft dreams,  
If, mixed with what appeared of rock, lawn, wood,  
Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,  
A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by Thee  
Designed to rise in humble privacy,  
A lowly Dwelling, here to be outspread,  
Like a small Hamlet, with its bashful head  
Half hid in native trees. Alas 'tis not,  
Nor ever was; I sighed, and left the spot  
Unconscious of its own untoward lot,  
And thought in silence, with regret too keen,  
Of unexperienced joys that might have been;  
Of neighbourhood and intermingling arts,  
And golden summer days uniting cheerful hearts.  
But time, irrevocable time, is flown,  
And let us utter thanks for blessings sown  
And reaped—what hath been, and what is, our own.

Not far we travelled ere a shout of glee,  
Startling us all, dispersed my reverie;  
Such shout as many a sportive echo meeting  
Oft-times from Alpine *chalets* sends a greeting.  
Whence the blithe hail? behold a Peasant stand  
On high, a kerchief waving in her hand!

Not unexpectant that by early day  
Our little Band would thrid this mountain way,  
Before her cottage on the bright hill side  
She hath advanced with hope to be descried.  
Right gladly answering signals we displayed,  
Moving along a tract of morning shade,  
And vocal wishes sent of like good will  
To our kind Friend high on the sunny hill—  
Luminous region, fair as if the prime  
Were tempting all astir to look aloft or climb ;  
Only the centre of the shining cot  
With door left open makes a gloomy spot,  
Emblem of those dark corners sometimes found  
Within the happiest breast on earthly ground.

Rich prospect left behind of stream and vale,  
And mountain-tops, a barren ridge we scale ;  
Descend and reach, in Yewdale's depths, a plain  
With haycocks studded, striped with yellowing grain—  
An area level as a Lake and spread  
Under a rock too steep for man to tread,  
Where sheltered from the north and bleak north-west  
Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest,  
Fearless of all assaults that would her brood molest.  
Hot sunbeams fill the steaming vale ; but hark,  
At our approach, a jealous watch-dog's bark,  
Noise that brings forth no liveried Page of state,  
But the whole household, that our coming wait.  
With Young and Old warm greetings we exchange,  
And jocund smiles, and toward the lowly Grange  
Press forward by the teasing dogs unscared.  
Entering, we find the morning meal prepared :  
So down we sit, though not till each had cast  
Pleased looks around the delicate repast—



Rich cream, and snow-white eggs fresh from the nest,  
With amber honey from the mountain's breast ;  
Strawberries from lane or woodland, offering wild  
Of children's industry, in hillocks piled ;  
Cakes for the nonce, and butter fit to lie  
Upon a lordly dish ; frank hospitality  
Where simple art with bounteous nature vied,  
And cottage comfort shunned not seemly pride.

Kind Hostess ! Handmaid also of the feast,  
If thou be lovelier than the kindling East,  
Words by thy presence unrestrained may speak  
Of a perpetual dawn from brow and cheek  
Instinct with light whose sweetest promise lies,  
Never retiring, in thy large dark eyes,  
Dark but to every gentle feeling true,  
As if their lustre flowed from ether's purest blue.

Let me not ask what tears may have been wept  
By those bright eyes, what weary vigils kept,  
Beside that hearth what sighs may have been heaved  
For wounds inflicted, nor what toil relieved  
By fortitude and patience, and the grace  
Of heaven in pity visiting the place.  
Not unadvisedly those secret springs  
I leave unsearched : enough that memory clings,  
Here as elsewhere, to notices that make  
Their own significance for hearts awake  
To rural incidents, whose genial powers  
Filled with delight three summer morning hours.

More could my pen report of grave or gay  
That through our gipsy travel cheered the way ;

But, bursting forth above the waves, the Sun  
 Laughs at my pains, and seems to say, "Be done."  
 Yet, Beaumont, thou wilt not, I trust, reprove  
 This humble offering made by Truth to Love,  
 Nor chide the Muse that stooped to break a spell  
 Which might have else been on me yet :—

FAREWELL.

UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPISTLE  
 THIRTY YEARS AFTER ITS COMPOSITION.

Comp. 1841. — Pub. 1842.

Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest  
 Take those dear young Ones to a fearless nest ;  
 And in Death's arms has long reposed the Friend  
 For whom this simple Register was penned.  
 Thanks to the moth that spared it for our eyes ;  
 And Strangers even the slighted Scroll may prize,  
 Moved by the touch of kindred sympathies.  
 For—save the calm, repentance sheds o'er strife  
 Raised by remembrances of misused life,  
 The light from past endeavours purely willed  
 And by heaven's favour happily fulfilled ;  
 Save hope that we, yet bound to Earth, may share  
 The joys of the Departed—what so fair  
 As blameless pleasure, not without some tears,  
 Reviewed through Love's transparent veil of years ?\*

---

\* LOUGHRIGG TARN, alluded to in the foregoing Epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Dianæ* as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Calvo. Since this Epistle was written Loughrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the

## The mighty tumult of the HOUSE OF KEYS;

The Isle of Man has a constitution of its own, independent of the Imperial Parliament. The House of twenty-four Keys is the popular assembly, corresponding to the British House of Commons; the Lieutenant-Governor and Council constitute the upper House. All legislative measures must be first considered and passed by both branches, and afterwards transmitted to the English Sovereign for the Royal Assent before becoming law.

Mona from our Abode is daily seen,  
But with a wilderness of waves between;

In a letter written from Bootle to Sir George Beaumont on the 28th August 1811, Wordsworth says:—

“This is like most others, a bleak and treeless coast, but abounding in corn fields, and with a noble beach, which is delightful either for walking or riding. The Isle of Man is right opposite our window; and though in this unsettled weather often invisible, its appearance has afforded us great amusement. One afternoon above the whole length of it was stretched a body of clouds, shaped and coloured like a magnificent grove in winter, when whitened with snow and illuminated by the morning sun, which, having melted the snow in part, has intermingled black masses among the brightness. The whole sky was scattered over with fleecy dark clouds, such as any sunshiny day produces, and which were changing their shapes and positions every moment. But this line of clouds immovably attached to the island, and manifestly took their shape from the influence of its mountains. There appeared to be just span enough of sky to allow the hand to slide between the top Snâfell, the highest peak in the island, and the base of this glorious forest, in which little change was noticeable for more than the space of half an hour.”

In the Fenwick note, Wordsworth tells us that this Epistle was written in 1804; and by referring to the Note prefixed to the first poem in the *Memorials of a Tour in Scotland*, 1803, (see Vol. II.

farm called “The Oaks,” from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have described; as his taste would have set an example how buildings, with all the accommodations modern society requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded parts of this country without injuring their native character. The design was not abandoned from failure of inclination on his part, but in consequence of local untowardnesses which need not be particularized.

p. 326), it will be seen that the lines entitled "Departure from the Vale of Grasmere, August 1803," beginning—

The gentlest Shade that walked Elysian plains,  
were "not actually written for the occasion, but transplanted from my 'Epistle to Sir George Beaumont.'"

It does not follow from this, however, that the lines belong to the year 1803 or 1804; because they were not published along with the earlier Memorials of the Scotch Tour, but appeared for the first time in the edition of 1827. It is certain that Wordsworth travelled down with his household from the Grasmere Parsonage to Bootle in August 1811—mainly to get some sea-air for his invalid children—and that he lived there for some time during the autumn of that year. He *may* have also gone down to the south-west coast of Cumberland in 1804, and then written a part of the poem; but we have no direct evidence of this; and I rather think that the mention of the year 1804 to Miss Fenwick is just another instance in which Wordsworth's memory failed him while dictating these memoranda. If the poem was not written at different times, but was composed as a whole in 1811, we may partly account for the date he gave to Miss Fenwick, when we remember that in the year 1827 he transferred a part of it (*viz.*, the introduction) to these Memorials of the Scotch Tour of 1803.

Up many a sharply-twining road and down,  
And over many a wide hill's craggy crown,  
Through the quick turns of many a hollow nook,  
And the rough bed of many an unbridged brook.

Their route would be from Grasmere by Red Bank, over by High Close to Elter Water, by Colwith into Yewdale, on to Waterhead; then probably, from Coniston over Walna Scar, into Duddondale, and thence to Bootle.

Like a gaunt shaggy Porter forced to wait  
In days of old romance at Archimago's gate.

See Spencer's *Faëry Queen*, Book I. canto i. st. 8.

The liveliest bird  
That in wild Arden's brakes was ever heard.

Compare *As you like it*, act ii. sc. 5.

And soon approached Diana's Looking-glass !  
To Loughrigg-tarn, &c.

See the note appended by Wordsworth to the sequel to this poem.

A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by Thee  
Designed to rise in humble privacy.

He imagines the house which Sir George Beaumont intended to build at Loughrigg Tarn, but which he never erected, to be really built by

his friend, very much as in the sonnet named "Anticipation, October 1803," he supposes England to have been invaded, and the battle fought in which "the Invaders were laid low."

Behold a Peasant stand  
On high, a kerchief waving in her hand !  
See the Fenwick note preceding the poem.

A barren ridge we scale ;  
Descend and reach, in Yewdale's depths, a plain.  
They went up Little Langdale, I think, past the Tarn to Fell Foot,  
and crossed over the ridge of Tilberthwaite, into Yewdale by the  
copper mines.

Under a rock too steep for man to tread,  
Where sheltered from the north and bleak north-west  
Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest,  
Fearless of all assaults that would her brood molest.

There is a Raven crag in Yewdale, evidently the one referred to in  
this passage, and also in the passage in the First Book of the *The Prelude*  
(see Vol. III. p. 141), beginning —

Oh ! when I have hung  
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass  
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock  
But ill sustained, &c.

. . . Toward the lowly Grange  
Press forward,

To Waterhead at the top of Coniston Lake.

In connection with Loughrigg Tarn, compare the note to the poem  
beginning—

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,  
and also the Biographical Sketch of Professor Archer Butler, prefixed  
to his *Sermons*, Vol. I.—ED.

## UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE,

PAINTED BY SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.

Comp. 1811. — Pub. 1815.

[This was written when we dwelt in the Parsonage at Grasmere.  
The principal features of the picture are Bredon Hill and Cloud Hill  
near Coleorton. I shall never forget the happy feeling with which my  
heart was filled when I was impelled to compose this Sonnet. We

resided only two years in this house and during the last half of the time, which was after this poem had been written, we lost our two children, Thomas and Catherine. Our sorrow upon these events often brought it to my mind, and cast me upon the support to which the last line of it gives expression—

“The appropriate calm of blest eternity.”

It is scarcely necessary to add that we still possess the Picture.]

PRAISED be the Art whose subtle power could stay  
Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious shape ;  
Nor would permit the thin smoke to escape,  
Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the day ;  
Which stopped that band of travellers on their way,  
Ere they were lost within the shady wood ;  
And showed the Bark upon the glassy flood  
For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.  
Soul-soothing Art ; whom Morning, Noon-tide, Even,<sup>1</sup>  
Do serve with all their changeful pageantry ;  
Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,  
Here, for the sight of mortal man, has given  
To one brief moment caught from fleeting time  
The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

Compare the *Elegiac Stanzas*, suggested by a picture of *Peel Castle in a Storm*, painted by Sir George Beaumont—especially the first three, and the fifth, sixth, and seventh stanzas.

In the letter written to Sir George Beaumont from Bootle, in 1811—referred to in the note to the previous poem—Wordsworth says, “A few days after I had enjoyed the pleasure of seeing, in different moods of mind, your Coleorton landscape from my fireside, it suggested to me the following sonnet, which—having walked out to the side of Grasmere brook, when it murmurs through the meadows near the Church—I composed immediately—

Praised be the Art . . .  
. . . . .

“The images of the smoke and the travellers are taken from your picture ; the rest were added, in order to place the thought in a clear point of view, and for the sake of variety.”—ED.

<sup>1</sup> C and 1843.

. . . . . which Morning, Noon-tide, Even, 1815.

## 1812.

The years 1812 and 1813 were even less productive years to Wordsworth than 1811 had been. The first of them was saddened by domestic losses, which deprived him for a time of the very power of work, and almost of interest in the labour to which his life was devoted. Three short pieces are all that belong to 1812 and 1813 respectively.—ED.

## SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL.

FOUNDED UPON A BELIEF PREVALENT AMONG THE PASTORAL VALES  
OF WESTMORELAND.

Comp. 1812. — Pub. 1820.

[The belief on which this is founded I have often heard expressed by an old neighbour of Grasmere.]

SWIFTLY turn the murmuring wheel !  
Night has brought the welcome hour  
When the weary fingers feel  
Help, as if from faery power ;  
Dewy night o'ershades the ground ;  
Turn the swift wheel round and round !  
Now, beneath the starry sky,  
Couch the widely-scattered sheep ;—  
Ply the pleasant labour ply !  
For the spindle, while they sleep,  
Runs with speed more smooth and fine,<sup>1</sup>  
Gathering up a trustier line.

Short-lived likings may be bred  
By a glance from fickle eyes ;  
But true love is like the thread  
Which the kindly wool supplies,

<sup>1</sup> 1832.

With a motion smooth and fine,

1820.

Runs with motion smooth and fine,

1827.

When the flocks are all at rest  
Sleeping on the mountain's breast.

It was for Sarah Hutchinson that this song was written. She lived for the most part either at Brinsop Court, Herefordshire, or at Rydal Mount, Westmoreland, or at Greta Hall, Keswick. When living at Greta Hall, she acted as Southey's amanuensis. She also frequently transcribed poems for Wordsworth, at Grasmere, Coleorton, and Rydal Mount.

The poem was placed by Wordsworth amongst those of the Fancy.  
—Ed.

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE OF  
A FRIEND IN THE VALE OF GRASMERE, 1812.

Comp. 1812. — Pub. 1815.

WHAT need of clamorous bells or ribands gay,  
These humble nuptials to proclaim or grace ?  
Angels of love, look down upon the place ;  
Shed on the chosen vale a sun-bright day !  
Yet no proud gladness would the Bride display  
Even for such promise :<sup>1</sup>—serious is her face,  
Modest her mien ; and she, whose thoughts keep pace  
With gentleness, in that becoming way  
Will thank you. Faultless does the Maid appear ;  
No disproportion in her soul, no strife :  
But, when the closer view of wedded life  
Hath shown that nothing human can be clear  
From frailty, for that insight may the Wife  
To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

This refers to the marriage of Thomas Hutchinson (Mrs Wordsworth's brother) to Mary Monkhouse, sister of the Mr Monkhouse with whom Wordsworth afterwards travelled on the Continent. The marriage took place on November 1, 1812. They lived at Nadnorth

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Even for such omen would the Bride display  
No mirthful gladness : . . . .



for eighteen years, and afterwards at Brinsop Court, Herefordshire, for twenty-one years. To their son—the Rev. Thomas Hutchinson of Kimbolton, Leominster, Herefordshire—and to their daughter—Miss Elizabeth Hutchinson of Rock Villa, West Malvern—I am indebted for much information in reference to their uncle and aunts. The portrait of Wordsworth in his forty-seventh year, by Richard Carruthers, is in Mr Hutchinson's possession at the Rectory, Kimbolton.—ED.

## WATER-FOWL.

Comp. 1812. — Pub. 1827.

[Observed frequently over the lakes of Rydal and Grasmere.]

“Let me be allowed the aid of verse to describe the evolutions which these visitants sometimes perform on a fine day, towards the close of winter.”—*Extract from the Author's Book on the Lakes.*

MARK how the feathered tenants of the flood,  
 With grace of motion that might scarcely seem  
 Inferior to angelical, prolong  
 Their curious pastime! shaping in mid air  
 (And sometimes with ambitious wing that soars  
 High as the level of the mountain-tops)  
 A circuit ampler than the lake beneath—  
 Their own domain; but ever, while intent  
 On tracing and retracing that large round,  
 Their jubilant activity evolves  
 Hundreds of curves and circlets,<sup>1</sup> to and fro,  
 Upward and downward, progress intricate  
 Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed  
 Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done—  
 Ten times, or more, I fancied it had ceased;  
 But lo! the vanished company again  
 Ascending; they approach—I hear their wings,  
 Faint, faint at first; and then an eager sound,

<sup>1</sup> 1832.

Hundreds of curves and circles, . . . 1827.

Past in a moment—and as faint again !  
 They tempt the sun to sport amid their plumes ;  
 They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,  
 To show them a fair image ; 'tis themselves,  
 Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering plain,  
 Painted more soft and fair as they descend  
 Almost to touch ;—then up again aloft,  
 Up with a sally and a flash of speed,  
 As if they scorned both resting-place and rest !

This was placed by Wordsworth amongst the “Poems of the Imagination.”—Ed.

## 1813.

See the note to the previous year, 1812.—Ed.

### VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB.

Comp. 1813. — Pub. 1815.

[Mrs Wordsworth and I, as mentioned in the “Epistle to Sir G. Beaumont,” lived sometime under its shadow.]

THIS Height a ministering Angel might select :  
 For from the summit of BLACK COMB (dread name  
 Derived from clouds and storms !) the amplest range  
 Of unobstructed prospect may be seen  
 That British ground commands :—low dusky tracts,  
 Where Trent is nursed, far southward ! Cambrian hills  
 To the south-west, a multitudinous show ;  
 And, in a line of eye-sight linked with these,  
 The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth  
 To Tiviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde :—  
 Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth  
 Gigantic mountains rough with crags ; beneath,  
 Right at the imperial station's western base

Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched  
 Far into silent regions blue and pale ;—  
 And visibly engirding Mona's Isle  
 That, as we left the plain, before our sight  
 Stood like a lofty mount, uplifting slowly  
 (Above the convex of the watery globe)  
 Into clear view the cultured fields that streak  
 Her habitable shores,<sup>1</sup> but now appears  
 A dwindled object, and submits to lie  
 At the spectator's feet.—Yon azure ridge,  
 Is it a perishable cloud ? Or there  
 Do we behold the line of Erin's coast ?<sup>2</sup>  
 Land sometimes by the roving shepherd-swain  
 (Like the bright confines of another world)  
 Not doubtfully perceived.—Look homeward now !  
 In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene  
 The spectacle, how pure !—Of Nature's works,  
 In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,  
 A revelation infinite it seems ;  
 Display august of man's inheritance,  
 Of Britain's calm felicity and power.

Black Comb stands at the southern extremity of Cumberland. These lines were included among the "Poems of the Imagination."—ED.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL ON A STONE, ON THE  
SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB.

Comp. 1813. — Pub. 1815.

[The circumstance, alluded to at the conclusion of these verses, was told me by Dr Satterthwaite, who was Incumbent of Bootle, a small town at the foot of Black Comb. He had the particulars from one of the engineers who was employed in making trigonometrical surveys of that region.]

<sup>1</sup> 1827.

Its habitable . . . . . 1815.

<sup>2</sup> 1832.

Do we behold the frame of Erin's coast ? 1815.

STAY, bold Adventurer; rest awhile thy limbs  
 On this commodious Seat! for much remains  
 Of hard ascent before thou reach the top  
 Of this huge Eminence,—from blackness named,  
 And, to far-travelled storms of sea and land,  
 A favourite spot of tournament and war!  
 But thee may no such boisterous visitants  
 Molest: may gentle breezes fan thy brow:  
 And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air  
 Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,  
 From centre to circumference, unveiled!  
 Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy rest,  
 That on the summit whither thou art bound  
 A geographic Labourer pitched his tent,  
 With books supplied and instruments of art,  
 To measure height and distance; lonely task,  
 Week after week pursued!—To him was given  
 Full many a glimpse (but sparingly bestowed  
 On timid man) of Nature's processes  
 Upon the exalted hills. He made report  
 That once, while there he plied his studious work  
 Within that canvas Dwelling, colours, lines,  
 And the whole surface of the out-spread map,  
 Became invisible:<sup>1</sup> for all around  
 Had darkness fallen—unthreatened, unproclaimed—  
 As if the golden day itself had been  
 Extinguished in a moment; total gloom,  
 In which he sate alone, with unclosed eyes,  
 Upon the blinded mountain's silent top!

These lines were included from the first among the "Inscriptions."  
 —ED.

<sup>1</sup> 1836.

Within that canvas Dwelling, suddenly  
 The many-coloured map before his eyes  
 Became invisible: . . .

## NOVEMBER, 1813.

Comp. Nov. 1813. — Pub. 1815.

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright,  
 Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and flow  
 Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or woe,  
 Insensible. He sits deprived of sight,  
 And lamentably wrapt in twofold night,  
 Whom no weak hopes deceived ; whose mind ensued,  
 Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,  
 Peace that should claim respect from lawless Might.  
 Dread King of Kings, vouchsafe a ray divine  
 To his forlorn condition ! let thy grace  
 Upon his inner soul in mercy shine ;  
 Permit his heart to kindle, and to embrace<sup>1</sup>  
 (Though it were only for a moment's space)  
 The triumphs of this hour ; for they are THINE !

The reference is to the rejoicings on the Leipsig victory of the Allied Forces, October 16 to 19, 1813. Napoleon crossed the Rhine on the 2nd November, and returned to Paris with the wreck of his army. George III. was English Sovereign ; but, owing to his illness, the Prince of Wales had been appointed Regent, and assumed executive power in January 1811. The King died at Windsor in 1820, being 82 years of age. He had been entirely blind for some years before his death. The "twofold night" referred to in the sonnet is sufficiently obvious.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> C. and 1843.

Permit his heart to kindle and embrace

1815.



## A P P E N D I X.





## APPENDIX.

---

### NOTE.

THE Prose Writings of Wordsworth, which are printed as an Appendix to this volume of his Poetical Works, include :—

1. The "Preface" to the second volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*, first published in 1800.
2. The "Dedication" of the edition of 1815 to Sir George Beaumont.
3. The "Preface" to the edition of 1815.
4. The "Appendix" to the Preface of 1800, on "Poetic Diction," first published in 1815.
5. The "Essay supplementary to the Preface" of 1815.
6. The "Postscript, 1835."

When Wordsworth published a second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1800, he prefixed to the first volume—which contained all his poems of 1798, with the exception of *The Convict*, and the five poems by Coleridge which were originally included in the Ballads—a Preface, in which he explained his poetical theory. This preface was expanded in the next edition (1802) by about 18 pages (the additions will all be found indicated by footnotes). The enlarged preface was republished with no alteration in 1805. But since the edition of 1815 contained a new preface, dealing with some other aspects of Poetry, this earlier essay—which Wordsworth thought inappropriate as an introduction to his later poems—was transferred to the end of the second volume, where it was printed as an appendix. In 1820 it closed the fourth and last volume of the edition of that year. In 1827 it was printed at the end of the fourth volume; in 1832 at the close of the third; and in 1836 at the end of the second volume. In 1849 it was printed with all the other prefaces, appendices, &c., at the close of the fifth volume of the collected works.

The "Dedication," the "Preface," and the "Essay Supplementary" of 1815, with the appendix note on "Poetic Diction," were all brought in, at one place or another, into every subsequent edition of the works.—ED.

### PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION OF THE LYRICAL BALLADS (1800).

THE first volume of these poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published, as an experiment,

which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain, how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure; and, on the other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them, they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.\*

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief, that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realised, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality, and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to add a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, because I knew that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by

---

\* For the sake of variety and from a consciousness of my own weakness, I was induced to request the assistance of a Friend, who furnished me with the Poems of the ANCIENT MARINER, the FOSTER-MOTHER'S TALE, the NIGHTINGALE, the DUNGEON, and the Poem entitled LOVE. I should not, however, have requested this assistance, had I not believed that the poems of my Friend would in a great measure have the same tendency as my own, and that, though there would be found a difference, there would be found no discordance in the colours of our style; as our opinions on the subject of poetry do almost entirely coincide.

Inserted in editions 1800, 1802, 1805.—ED.

the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because, adequately to display my opinions, and fully to enforce my arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined, without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible, that there would be something like impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed, that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shakspeare, and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author, in the present day, makes to his reader; but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have

not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope therefore the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonourable accusations which can be brought against an Author; namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavouring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language;

because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appears to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and, because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent and a far more philosophical language than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation.\*

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dis-

---

\* It is worth while here to observe, that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day.

honourable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time, that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy *purpose*. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, as that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a *purpose*. If this opinion is erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and, as by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced, that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these poems has a purpose.\* I have also informed my reader what this purpose will be

---

\* What follows from "I have also" (p. 280) to "upon this subject" (foot of page 281), printed in edd. 1800 to 1843, was omitted in 1846.—ED.

found principally to be: namely, to illustrate the manner in which our feelings and ideas are associated in a state of excitement. But, speaking in language somewhat more appropriate, it is to follow the fluxes and refluxes of the mind when agitated by the great and simple affections of our nature. This object I have endeavoured in these short essays to attain by various means; by tracing the maternal passion through many of its more subtle windings, as in the poems of the Idiot Boy and the Mad Mother;\* by accompanying the last struggles of a human being, at the approach of death, cleaving in solitude to life and society, as in the Poem of the Forsaken Indian; by showing, as in the stanzas entitled "We are Seven," the perplexity and obscurity which in childhood attend our notion of death, or rather our utter inability to admit that notion; or by displaying the strength of fraternal, or to speak more philosophically, of moral attachment when early associated with the great and beautiful objects of nature, as in "The Brothers;" or, as in the incident of Simon Lee, by placing my reader in the way of receiving from ordinary moral sensations another and more salutary impression than we are accustomed to receive from them. It has also been part of my general purpose to attempt to sketch characters under the influence of less impassioned feelings as in the Two April mornings, The Fountain, The Old Man Travelling, The Two Thieves, &c., characters of which the elements are simple, belonging rather to nature than to manners, such as exist now, and will probably always exist, and which from their constitution may be distinctly and profitably contemplated. I will not abuse the indulgence of my reader by dwelling longer upon this subject; but it is proper that I should mention one other circumstance which distinguishes these Poems from the popular poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and

---

\* "And the one beginning 'Her eyes are wild,'" &c., in edd. 1836-43.—Ed.

situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling. My meaning will be rendered perfectly intelligible by referring my reader to the Poems entitled Poor Susan and the Childless Father, particularly to the last stanza of the latter Poem.

I will not suffer a sense of false modesty to prevent me from asserting, that I point my reader's attention to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another, in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupation produces a craving for extraordinary incident, which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakspeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories



in verse.—When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavour made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonourable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and did I not further add to this impression a belief, that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed, by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their style, in order, among other reasons, that I may not be censured for not having performed what I never attempted. The reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes; and, I hope, are utterly rejected, as an ordinary device to elevate the style, and raise it above prose. I have proposed to myself to intimate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavoured utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a different claim of my own. There will also be

found in these pieces little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men, and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart, is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how, to give my reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavoured to look steadily at my subject; consequently, there is, I hope, in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense; but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now, these men would establish a canon of

criticism which the reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him, that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose, when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt prose and metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction:—

‘ In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,  
 And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire :  
 The birds, in vain their amorous descant join,  
 Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.  
 These ears, alas ! for other notes repine ;  
*A different object do these eyes require ;*  
*My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine ;*  
*And in my breast the imperfect joys expire ;*  
 Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,  
 And new-born pleasure brings to happier men ;  
 The fields to all their wonted tribute bear ;  
 To warm their little loves the birds complain.  
*I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,*  
*And weep the more because I weep in vain.’*

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in italics : it is equally obvious, that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word “fruitless” for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation I have shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to Poetry; and it was previously asserted, that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed, that there neither is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them sisters: but where shall we find bonds of connexion sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing in degree; Poetry\* sheds no tears "such as Angels weep," but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that † the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really

---

\* I here use the word 'Poetry' (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre: nor is this, in truth, a *strict* antithesis: because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable.

† What follows from "the language of such," &c., down to "proper to remind the reader" (p. 295), was added in the edition of 1802.—ED.

spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments: for if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendour of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have their due effect, if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and, as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labour is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded that, whatever may be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost

unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets both ancient and modern will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise, and when we censure : and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask what is meant by the word Poet ? What is a Poet ? To whom does he address himself ? And what language is to be expected from him ? He is a man speaking to men : a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind ; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him ; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added, a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present ; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events, than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves ;—whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But, whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt but that the language which it will suggest to him, must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious, that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and the more industriously he applies this principle, the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellencies of another kind for those which

are unattainable by him ; and endeavours occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand ; who talk of Poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure ; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontinac, or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing : it is so : its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative ; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion ; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence \* to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, that of the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things ; between this, and the Biographer and Historian there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere, because

---

\* " Which gives strength and divinity," in edd. 1802 to 1832. — Ed.



not formal, but indirect ; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love : further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure : I would not be misunderstood : but wherever we sympathise with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure ; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet ? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure ; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions ; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the

mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting qualities of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those, which, through labour and length of time, the man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and inalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakspeare hath said of man, 'that he looks before and after.' He is the rock of defence of human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs, in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed, the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favourite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of

all knowledge—it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labours of men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present, but he will be ready to follow the steps of the man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the object of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarised to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man.—It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavour to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What I have thus far said applies to Poetry in general; but especially to those parts of composition where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorise the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense, who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective, in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and

are coloured by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring my reader to the description which I have before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what I have there said is, that the Poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe: with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of the passions of men. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the

Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless therefore we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what I have already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most

general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me, to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colours of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly underrate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a more naked and simple style than I have aimed at, which have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished *chiefly* to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a

pleasure to mankind as he who is sensible of the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure. Now, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind: ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling,\*[and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt, but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless; yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them.] This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the re-perusal of the distressful parts of 'Clarissa

---

\* What follows, down to "found in them," was added in the edition of 1802.—ED.

Harlowe,' or the 'Gamester'; while Shakspeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure—an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement.—On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen), if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious), in the feelings of pleasure which the reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; I mean the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin; it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle



to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity; the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care, that, whatever passions he communicates to his reader, those passions, if his reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an over-balance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely—all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper

passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the reader. All that it is *necessary* to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming what few persons will deny, that of two descriptions either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once. We \* see that Pope, by the power of verse alone, has contrived to render the plainest common sense interesting, and even frequently to invest it with the appearance of passion. In consequence of these convictions I related in metre the tale of Goody Blake and Harry Gill, which is one of the rudest of this collection. I wished to draw attention to the truth that the power of the human imagination is sufficient to produce such changes even in our physical nature as might almost appear miraculous. The truth is an important one; the fact (for it is a *fact*) is a valuable illustration of it; and I have the satisfaction of knowing that it has been communicated to many hundreds of people who would never have heard of it, had it not been narrated as a Ballad, and in a more impressive metre than is usual in Ballads.

Having thus explained a few of the reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular Poems, and to some defects which will probably be found

---

\* From "we see that Pope," to "usual in Ballads," included in edd. 1800 to 1843, omitted in 1846.—Ed.

in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance,\* I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases, from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence, I have no doubt, that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men: for where the understanding of an author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself; for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and becomes utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the reader ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope he will

---

\* Added here, in edd. 1800 to 1832, "sometimes from diseased impulses."  
—ED.

permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to Poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies, of which Dr Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen.

'I put my hat upon my head  
And walked into the Strand,  
And there I met another man  
Whose hat was in his hand.'

Immediately under these lines I will place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the *Babes in the Wood*.

'These pretty Babes with hand in hand  
Went wandering up and down :  
But never more they saw the Man  
Approaching from the Town.'

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can *lead* to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus?

Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man ?

One request I must make of my reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but, to such and such classes of people, it will appear mean or ludicrous ! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal : let the reader then abide, independently, by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption, that on other occasions where we have been displeased, he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly ; and, further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us, with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon Poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste : for an *accurate* taste in Poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced reader from judging for himself (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself) ; but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest, that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous ; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavoured to recommend: for the reader will say that he has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect, that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honourable bigotry for the objects which have long continued to please them; we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow, that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But, would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for Poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected; but it has not been so much my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of Poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming, that, if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of Poetry would be produced,

which is genuine Poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained; and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining: and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

### ON POETIC DICTION.

See p. 295—‘by what is usually called POETIC DICTION.’

(FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1815.)

PERHAPS, as I have no right to expect that attentive perusal without which,—confined as I have been to the narrow limits of a preface,—my meaning cannot be thoroughly understood, I am anxious to give an exact notion of the sense in which the phrase *poetic diction* has been used; and for this purpose, a few words shall here be added concerning the origin and characteristics of the phraseology which I have condemned under that name.

The earliest poets of all nations generally wrote from passion excited by real events; they wrote naturally, and as men: feeling powerfully as they did, their language was daring, and figurative. In succeeding times, Poets, and men ambitious of the fame of Poets, perceiving the influence of such language, and desirous of producing the same effect without being animated by the same passion, set themselves to a mechanical adoption of these figures of speech, and made use of them, sometimes with propriety, but much more frequently applied them to feelings and thoughts with

which they had no natural connexion whatsoever. A language was thus insensibly produced, differing materially from the real language of men in *any situation*. The reader or hearer of this distorted language found himself in a perturbed and unusual state of mind; when affected by the genuine language of passion he had been in a perturbed and unusual state of mind also: in both cases he was willing that his common judgment and understanding should be laid asleep, and he had no instinctive and infallible perception of the true to make him reject the false; the one served as a passport for the other. The emotion was in both cases delightful, and no wonder if he confounded the one with the other, and believed them both to be produced by the same, or similar causes. Besides, the Poet spake to him in the character of a man to be looked up to, a man of genius and authority. Thus, and from a variety of other causes, this distorted language was received with admiration: and Poets, it is probable, who had before contented themselves for the most part with misapplying only expressions which at first had been dictated by real passion, carried the abuse still further, and introduced phrases composed apparently in the spirit of the original figurative language of passion, yet altogether of their own invention, and characterised by various degrees of wanton deviation from good sense and nature.

It is indeed true that the language of the earliest Poets was felt to differ materially from ordinary language, because it was the language of extraordinary occasions; but it was really spoken by men—language which the Poet himself had uttered when he had been affected by the events which he described, or which he had heard uttered by those around him. To this language it is probable that metre of some sort or other was early superadded. This separated the genuine language of Poetry still further from common life, so that whoever read or heard poems of these earliest Poets



felt himself moved in a way in which he had not been accustomed to be moved in real life, and by causes manifestly different from those which acted upon him in real life. This was the great temptation to all the corruptions which have followed: under the protection of this feeling succeeding Poets constructed a phraseology which had one thing, it is true, in common with the genuine language of poetry, namely, that it was not heard in ordinary conversation; that it was unusual. But the first Poets, as I have said, spake a language which, though unusual, was still the language of men. This circumstance, however, was disregarded by their successors; they found that they could please by easier means: they became proud of modes of expression which they themselves had invented, and which was uttered only by themselves.\* In process of time metre became a symbol or promise of this unusual language, and whoever took upon him to write in metre, according as he possessed more or less of true poetic genius, introduced less or more of this adulterated phraseology into his compositions, and the true and the false were inseparably interwoven until the taste of men becoming gradually perverted, this language was received as a natural language: and at length, by the influence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really become so. Abuses of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas.

It would not be uninteresting to point out the causes of the pleasure given by this extravagant and absurd diction. It depends upon a great variety of causes, but upon none perhaps more than its influence in impressing a notion of

---

\* Added in edd. 1815-1832, "and, with the spirit of a fraternity, they arrogated it to themselves as their own."—Ed.

the peculiarity and exaltation of the Poet's character, and in flattering the reader's self-love by bringing him nearer to a sympathy with that character; an effect which is accomplished by unsettling ordinary habits of thinking, and thus assisting the reader to approach to that perturbed and dizzy state of mind in which if he does not find himself, he imagines that he is *balked* of a peculiar enjoyment which poetry can and ought to bestow.

The sonnet quoted from Gray, in the Preface, except the lines printed in Italics, consists of little else but this diction, though not of the worst kind; and, indeed, if one may be permitted to say so, it is far too common in the best writers, both ancient and modern. Perhaps in no way, by positive example, could more easily be given a notion of what I mean by the phrase *poetic diction*, than by referring to a comparison between the metrical paraphrase which we have of passages in the Old and New Testament, and those passages as they exist in our common Translation. See Pope's 'Messiah' throughout; Prior's 'Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue,' &c. &c. 'Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,' &c. &c. See 1st Corinthians, chapter xiii. By way of immediate example, take the following of Dr Johnson:—

'Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes,  
Observe her labours, Sluggard, and be wise;  
No stern command, no monitory voice,  
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;  
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away  
To snatch the blessings of a plenteous day;  
When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain,  
She crops the harvest and she stores the grain.  
How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,  
Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy powers?  
While artful shades thy downy couch inclose,  
And soft solicitation courts repose,  
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,  
Year chases year with unremitted flight,  
Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow,  
Shall spring to seize thee, like an ambushed foe.'

From this hubbub of words pass to the original. ‘Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise : which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that travaileth, and thy want as an armed man.’ Proverbs, chap. vi.

One more quotation, and I have done. It is from Cowper’s Verses, supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk :—

‘Religion! what treasure untold  
Resides in that heavenly word?  
More precious than silver and gold,  
Or all that this earth can afford.

‘But the sound of the church-going bell  
These valleys and rocks never heard,  
Ne’er sighed at the sound of a knell,  
Or smiled when a sabbath appeared.

‘Ye winds, that have made me your sport,  
Convey to this desolate shore  
Some cordial endearing report  
Of a land I must visit no more.

‘My Friends, do they now and then send  
A wish or a thought after me?  
Oh, tell me I yet have a friend,  
Though a friend I am never to see.’

I have quoted this passage as an instance of three different styles of composition. The first four lines are poorly expressed; some Critics would call the language prosaic; the fact is, it would be bad prose, so bad, that it is scarcely worse in metre. The epithet “church-going” applied to a bell, and that by so chaste a writer as Cowper, is an instance of the strange abuses which Poets have introduced into their language till they and their readers take them as matters of course, if they do not single them out expressly as objects

of admiration. The two lines, "Ne'er sighed at the sound," &c., are, in my opinion, an instance of the language of passion wrested from its proper use, and, from the mere circumstance of the composition being in metre, applied upon an occasion that does not justify such violent expressions; and I should condemn the passage, though perhaps few readers will agree with me, as vicious poetic diction. The last stanza is throughout admirably expressed; it would be equally good whether in prose or verse, except that the reader has an exquisite pleasure in seeing such natural language so naturally connected with metre. The beauty of this stanza tempts me to conclude with a principle which ought never to be lost sight of, and which has been my chief guide in all I have said,—namely, that in works of *imagination and sentiment*, for of these only have I been treating, in proportion as ideas and feelings are valuable, whether the composition be in prose or in verse, they require and exact one and the same language. Metre is but adventitious to composition, and the phraseology for which that passport is necessary, even where it may be graceful at all, will be little valued by the judicious.

#### DEDICATION TO THE EDITION OF 1815.

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,—Accept my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these Volumes to you. In addition to a lively pleasure derived from general considerations, I feel a particular satisfaction; for, by inscribing these Poems with your Name, I seem to myself in some degree to repay, by an appropriate honour, the great obligation which I owe to one part of the Collection—as having been the means of first making us personally known to each other. Upon much of the remainder, also, you have a peculiar claim,—for some of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your

own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name and family, who were born in that neighbourhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference, by the dashing stream of Grace Dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood.—Nor is there any one to whom such parts of this Collection as have been inspired or coloured by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself—to whom it has suggested so many admirable pictures. Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this region excited your admiration; and I know that you are bound to it in mind by a still-strengthening attachment.

Wishing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received from your pencil,\* may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship, which I reckon among the blessings of my life,—

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir George,

Yours most affectionately

And faithfully,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,

*February 1, 1815.*

## PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815.

THE observations prefixed to that portion of these Volumes which was published many years ago, under the title of “Lyrical Ballads,” have so little of a special application to the greater part of the present enlarged and diversified collection, that they could not with propriety stand as an Introduction to it. Not deeming it, however, expedient to

---

\* “The state of the plates has, for some time, not allowed them to be repeated” (in edd. 1832 to 1845).—ED.

suppress that exposition, slight and imperfect as it is, of the feelings which had determined the choice of the subjects, and the principles which had regulated the composition of those Pieces, I have placed it so as to form an Essay supplementary to the Preface, to be attended to, or not, at the pleasure of the reader.

In the preface to that part of "The Recluse," lately published under the title of "The Excursion," I have alluded to a meditated arrangement of my minor Poems, which should assist the attentive reader in perceiving their connection with each other, and also their subordination to that work. I shall here say a few words explanatory of this arrangement, as carried into effect in the present Volumes.

The powers requisite for the production of poetry are, first, those of Observation and Description; *i.e.*, the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and with fidelity to describe them, unmodified by any passion or feeling existing in the mind of the describer; whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place only in the memory. This power, although indispensable to a Poet, is one which he employs only in submission to necessity, and never for a continuance of time: as its exercise supposes all the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, and in a state of subjection to external objects, much in the same way as a translator or engraver ought to be to his original. 2dly, Sensibility,—which, the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a Poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as re-acted upon by his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the Poet delineated in the original preface before mentioned.) 3dly, Reflection,—which makes the Poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts, and feelings; and assists the sensibility in perceiving their connection with each

other. 4thly, Imagination and Fancy,—to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention,—by which characters are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet's own heart and mind, or of external life and nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most impressive to the imagination, and most fitted to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions, which the Poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment,—to decide how and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater, nor the greater, slighting the less, arrogate, to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition.\*

The materials of Poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, the Narrative,—including the Epopœia, the Historic Poem, the Tale, the Romance, the Mock heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighbourhood, that dear production of our days, the metrical Novel. Of this class, the distinguishing mark is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself the source from which everything primarily flows. Epic poets, in order that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as *singing* from the inspiration of the Muse, '*Arma virumque cano*;' but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value: the Iliad or the Paradise Lost would gain little in our estimation by being chanted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to *tell* their tale;—so that of the whole it may be

---

\* As sensibility to harmony of numbers, and the power of producing it, are invariably attendants upon the faculties above specified, nothing has been said upon these requisites (in edd. 1836 to 1845).—Ed.

affirmed that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2dly, The Dramatic,—consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque, in which the Poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, inasmuch as it proceeds by dialogue; though, depending, to the degree that it does, upon music, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the Lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of a monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3dly, The Lyrical,—containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their *full* effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium,—descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as The Seasons of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and sentiments, as are Shenstone's Schoolmistress, The Cotter's Saturday Night of Burns, The Twa Dogs of the same author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton, Beattie's Minstrel, Goldsmith's Deserted Village. The Epitaph, the Inscription, the Sonnet, most of the Epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all loco-descriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic,—the principal object of which is direct instruction; as the poem of Lucretius, The Georgics of Virgil, The Fleece of Dyer, Mason's English Garden, &c.

6 And, lastly, philosophical Satire, like that of Horace and Juvenal: personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of poetry.



Out of the three last has been constructed a composite order, of which Young's Night Thoughts, and Cowper's Task, are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that Poems, apparently miscellaneous, may, with propriety, be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind *predominant* in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each of these considerations, the following Poems have been divided into classes; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, and for the sake of exhibiting in it the three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle, and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing with Childhood, and terminating with Old Age, Death, and Immortality. My guiding wish was, that the small pieces thus discriminated, might be regarded under a two-fold view; as composing an entire work within themselves, and as adjuncts to the philosophical Poem, "The Recluse." This arrangement has long presented itself habitually to my own mind. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to scatter the contents of these volumes at random, if I had been persuaded that, by the plan adopted, anything material would be taken from the natural effect of the pieces, individually, on the mind of the unreflecting reader. I trust there is a sufficient variety in each class to prevent this: while, for him who reads with reflection, the arrangement will serve as a commentary unostentatiously directing his attention to my purposes, both particular and general. But, as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this classification, it is proper first to remind the reader, that certain poems are placed according to the powers of mind, in the Author's conception, predominant in the production of them; *predominant*, which implies the exertion of

other faculties in less degree. Where there is more imagination than fancy in a poem, it is placed under the head of imagination, and *vice versa*. Both of the above classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of "Poems Founded on the Affections;" as might this latter from those, and from the class "Proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." The most striking characteristics of each piece, mutual illustration, variety, and proportion, have governed me throughout.

It may be proper in this place to state, that the Extracts in the second class, entitled "Juvenile Pieces," are in many places altered from the printed copy, chiefly by omission and compression. The slight alterations of another kind were for the most part made not long after the publication of the Poems from which the extracts are taken.\* These extracts seem to have a title to be placed here, as they were the productions of youth, and represent implicitly some of the features of a youthful mind, at a time when images of nature supplied to it the place of thought, sentiment, and almost of action; or, as it will be found expressed, of a state of mind when

‘the sounding cataract  
 Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,  
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
 Their colours and their forms, were then to me  
 An appetite, a feeling, and a love,  
 That had no need of a remoter charm,  
 By thought supplied, or any interest  
 Unborrowed from the eye.’

I will own that I was much at a loss what to select of these descriptions: and perhaps it would have been better either to have reprinted the whole, or suppressed what I have given.†

None of the other classes, except those of Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark

---

\* These poems are now printed entire (ed. 1820 and onwards).

† The preceding paragraph omitted in ed. 1845.—ED.

of general application may be made. All Poets, except the dramatic, have been in the practice of feigning that their works were composed to the music of the harp or lyre: with what degree of affectation this has been done in modern times, I leave to the judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability so far, or to make such a large demand upon the reader's charity. Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and therefore, cannot have their due force without a supposed musical accompaniment; but, in much the greatest part, as a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp, I require nothing more than an animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject. Poems, however humble in their kind, if they be good in that kind, cannot read themselves; the law of long syllable and short must not be so inflexible,—the letter of metre must not be so impassive to the spirit of versification,—as to deprive the reader of a voluntary power to modulate, in subordination to the sense, the music of the poem;—in the same manner as his mind is left at liberty, and even summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed with, the true Poet does not therefore abandon his privilege distinct from that of the mere Proseman—

‘He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own.’

I come now to the consideration of the words Fancy and Imagination, as employed in the classification of the following Poems. ‘A man,’ says an intelligent author, ‘has imagination in proportion as he can distinctly copy in idea the impressions of sense: it is the faculty which *images* within the mind the phenomena of sensation. A man has fancy in proportion as he can call up, connect, or associate, at

pleasure, those internal images (*φαντάζειν* is to cause to appear) so as to complete ideal representations of absent objects. Imagination is the power of depicting, and fancy of evoking and combining. The imagination is formed by patient observation; the fancy by a voluntary activity in shifting the scenery of the mind. The more accurate the imagination, the more safely may a painter, or a poet, undertake a delineation, or a description, without the presence of the objects to be characterized. The more versatile the fancy, the more original and striking will be the decorations produced.'—*British Synonyms discriminated*, by W. Taylor.

Is not this as if a man should undertake to supply an account of a building, and be so intent upon what he had discovered of the foundation as to conclude his task without once looking up at the superstructure? Here, as in other instances, throughout the volume, the judicious Author's mind is enthralled by Etymology; he takes up the original word as his guide and escort, and too often does not perceive how soon he becomes its prisoner, without liberty to tread in any path but that to which it confines him. It is not easy to find out how imagination, thus explained, differs from distinct remembrance of images; or fancy from quick and vivid recollection of them: each is nothing more than a mode of memory. If the two words bear the above meaning, and no other, what term is left to designate that faculty of which the Poet is 'all compact;' he whose eye glances from earth to heaven, whose spiritual attributes body forth what his pen is prompt in turning to shape; or what is left to characterize Fancy, as insinuating herself into the heart of objects with creative activity? Imagination, in the sense of the word as giving title to a class of the following Poems, has no reference to images that are merely a faithful copy, existing in the mind, of absent external objects; but is a word of higher import, denoting operations

of the mind upon those objects, and processes of creation or of composition, governed by certain fixed laws. I proceed to illustrate my meaning by instances. A parrot *hangs* from the wires of his cage by his beak or by his claws; or a monkey from the bough of a tree by his paws or his tail. Each creature does so literally and actually. In the first Eclogue of Virgil, the shepherd thinking of the time when he is to take leave of his farm, thus addresses his goats:—

‘Non ego vos posthac viridī projectus in antro  
Dumosa *pendere* procul de rupe videbo.’

‘Half way down  
*Hangs* one who gathers samphire,’

is the well-known expression of Shakespeare, delineating an ordinary image upon the cliffs of Dover. ‘In these two instances is a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate imagination, in the use of the words; neither the goats nor the samphire-gatherer do literally hang, as does the parrot or the monkey; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its own gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

‘As when, far off at sea, a fleet descried,  
*Hangs* in the clouds, by equinoctial winds  
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles  
Of Ternate or Tidore, whence merchants bring  
Their spicy drugs : they on the trading flood  
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape  
Ply, stemming nightly toward the Pole : so seemed  
Far off the flying Fiend.’

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word *hangs*, and exerted upon the whole image : First, the fleet, an aggregate of many ships, is represented as one mighty person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the Poet dares to represent it as *hanging in the clouds*, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplat-

ing the image itself, and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime object to which it is compared.

From images of sight we will pass to those of sound.\*

‘Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove *broods* ;  
of the same bird,

‘His voice was *buried* among trees,  
Yet to be come at by the breeze ;’

‘O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee *Bird*,  
Or but a wandering *Voice* ?’

The stock-dove is said to *coo*, a sound well imitating the note of the bird : but, by the intervention of the metaphor *broods*, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation. “His voice was buried among trees,” a metaphor expressing the love of *seclusion* by which this Bird is marked ; and characterizing its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade ; yet a note so peculiar, and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the Poet feels, penetrates the shade in which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

‘Shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice ?’

This concise interrogation characterizes the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporal existence ; the Imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

---

\* Added in edd. 1836-45, “which, as they must necessarily be of a less definite character, shall be selected from other volumes.”—ED.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with properties that do not inhere in them, upon an incitement from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to re-act upon the mind which hath performed the process, like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently perilous situation of the goat, hanging upon the shaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the shepherd, contemplating it from the seclusion of the cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffecting the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other!

‘As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
 Couched on the bald top of an eminence,  
 Wonder to all who do the same espy  
 By what means it could thither come, and whence,  
 So that it seems a thing endued with sense,  
 Like a sea-beast crawled forth, which on a shelf  
 Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun himself.

‘Such seemed this Man : not all alive or dead,  
 Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age.

Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
 That heareth not the loud winds when they call,  
 And moveth altogether if it move at all.’

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The

stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man, who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite and coalesce in just comparison. After what has been said, the image of the cloud need not be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying power; but the imagination also shapes and *creates*; and how? By innumerable processes; and in none does it more delight than in that of consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number,—alterations proceeding from, and governed by, a sublime consciousness of the soul in her own mighty and almost divine powers. Recur to the passage already cited from Milton. When the compact Fleet, as one person, has been introduced ‘Sailing from Bengala,’ ‘They,’ *i.e.*, the ‘merchants,’ representing the fleet resolved into a multitude of ships, ‘ply’ their voyage towards the extremities of the earth: ‘So’ (referring to the word ‘As’ in the commencement) ‘seemed the flying fiend;’ the image of his Person acting to recombine the multitude of ships into one body,—the point from which the comparison set out. ‘So seemed,’ and to whom seemed? To the heavenly Muse who dictates the poem, to the eye of the Poet’s mind, and to that of the reader, present at one moment in the wide Ethiopian, and the next in the solitudes, then first broken in upon, of the infernal regions!

‘Modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.’

Hear again this mighty poet,—speaking of the Messiah going forth to expel from heaven the rebellious angels,



'Attended by ten thousand thousand Saints  
He onward came : far off his coming shone,'—

the retinue of Saints and the Person of the Messiah himself, lost almost and merged in the splendour of that indefinite abstraction, 'His coming!'

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the present Volumes, and especially upon one division of them, I shall spare myself and the reader the trouble of considering the Imagination as it deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it regulates the composition of characters, and determines the course of actions; I will not consider it (more than I have already done by implication) as that power which, in the language of one of my most esteemed Friends, 'draws all things to one; which makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessories, take one colour and serve to one effect.'\* The grand store-houses of enthusiastic and meditative Imagination, of poetical, as contradistinguished from human and dramatic Imagination, are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures, and the works of Milton, to which I cannot forbear to add those of Spenser. I select these writers in preference to those of ancient Greece and Rome, because the anthropomorphism of the Pagan religion subjected the minds of the greatest poets in those countries too much to the bondage of definite form; from which the Hebrews were preserved by their abhorrence of idolatry. This abhorrence was almost as strong in our great epic Poet, both from circumstances of his life, and from the constitution of his mind. However imbued the surface might be with classical literature, he was a Hebrew in soul; and all things tended in him towards the sublime. Spenser, of a gentler nature, maintained his freedom by aid of his allegorical spirit, at one time inciting him to create

---

\* Charles Lamb upon the genius of Hogarth.

persons out of abstractions; and, at another, by a superior effort of genius, to give the universality and permanence of abstractions to his human beings, by means of attributes and emblems that belong to the highest moral truths and the purest sensations,—of which his character of *Una* is a glorious example. Of the human and dramatic Imagination the works of Shakespeare are an inexhaustible source.

‘I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness;  
I never gave you kingdoms, called you Daughters!’

And if, bearing in mind the many Poets distinguished by this prime quality, whose names I omit to mention; yet justified by a recollection of the insults which the ignorant, the incapable, and the presumptuous, have heaped upon these and my other writings, I may be permitted to anticipate the judgment of posterity upon myself, I shall declare (censurable, I grant, if the notoriety of the fact above stated does not justify me) that I have given, in these unfavourable times, evidence of exertions of this faculty upon its worthiest objects, the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of Man, his natural affections, and his acquired passions; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance.

This subject may be dismissed with observing \*—that, in the series of Poems placed under the head of Imagination, I have begun with one of the earliest processes of Nature in the development of this faculty. Guided by one of my own primary consciousnesses, I have represented a commutation and transfer of internal feelings, co-operating with external accidents, to plant, for immortality, conjoined impressions of sound and sight, in the celestial soil of the Imagination. The Boy, there introduced, is listening, with something of a feverish and restless anxiety, for the recurrence of the riotous

---

\* The following paragraph was omitted in edition 1845.—Ed.

sounds which he had previously excited ; and, at the moment when the intenseness of his mind is beginning to remit, he is surprised into a perception of the solemn and tranquillizing images which the Poem describes.—The Poems next in succession exhibit the faculty exerting itself upon various objects of the external universe ; then follow others, where it is employed upon feelings, characters, and actions ; \* and the class is concluded with imaginative pictures of moral, political, and religious sentiments.

To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterised as the power of evoking and combining, or, as my friend Mr Coleridge has styled it, ‘ the aggregative and associative power,’ my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and to combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy ; but either the materials evoked and combined are different ; or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be susceptible of change in their constitution, from her touch : and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these, are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from everything but the plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to describe Queen Mab as coming,

‘ In shape no bigger than an agate-stone  
On the fore-finger of an alderman.’

Having to speak of stature, she does not tell you that her gigantic Angel was as tall as Pompey’s Pillar ; much less that he was twelve cubits, or twelve hundred cubits high ; or that his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or Atlas ;

---

\* Such of these as were furnished by Scottish subjects have since been arranged in a class, entitled, *Memorials of Tours in Scotland*.

—because these, and if they were a million times as high it would be the same, are bounded. The expression is, ‘His stature reached the sky!’ the illimitable firmament!—When the Imagination frames a comparison, if it does not strike on the first presentation, a sense of the truth of the likeness, from the moment that it is perceived grows—and continues to grow—upon the mind; the resemblance depending less upon outline of form and feature, than upon expression and effect; less upon casual and outstanding, than upon inherent and internal properties: moreover, the images invariably modify each other.—The law under which the processes of Fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be appositely produced or fortunately combined. Fancy depends upon the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images; trusting that their number and the felicity with which they are linked together, will make amends for the want of individual value: or she prides herself upon the curious subtilty and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities. If she can win you over to her purpose, and impart to you her feelings, she cares not how unstable or transitory may be her influence, knowing that it will not be out of her power to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the Imagination is conscious of an indestructible dominion;—the Soul may fall away from it, not being able to sustain its grandeur; but, if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished.—Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal—Yet is it not the less true that Fancy, as she is an active, is also, under her own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims

at a rivalry with the Imagination, and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse; and chiefly from those of our own Country. Scarcely a page of the impassioned parts of Bishop Taylor's works can be opened that shall not afford examples. Referring the reader to those inestimable volumes, I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed to Lord Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the *Paradise Lost*:—

‘The dews of the evening most carefully shun,  
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun.’

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathising Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence,

‘Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
Wept at completion of the mortal sin.’

The associating link is the same in each instance; Dew and rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprise is the effect in the former case; a flash of surprise and nothing more; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects of the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous, that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as ‘Earth had, before, trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan.’

Awe-stricken as I am by contemplating the operations of the mind of this truly divine Poet, I scarcely dare venture to add that “An Address to an Infant,” which the reader will find under the class of Fancy in the present volumes, exhibits something of this communion and interchange of instruments and functions between the two powers; and is

accordingly placed last in the class, as a preparation for that of Imagination, which follows.\*

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition, though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteristics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retinue as 'A palsied king,' and yet a military monarch,—advancing for conquest with his army; the several bodies of which, and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of *fanciful* comparisons, which indicate on the part of the Poet extreme activity of intellect, and a corresponding hurry of delightful feeling. Winter retires from the foe into his fortress, where

'a magazine  
Of sovereign juice is cellared in ;  
Liquor that will the siege maintain  
Should Phœbus ne'er return again.'

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in its preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms.

'Tis that that gives the poet rage,  
And thaws the jellied blood of age ;  
Matures the young, restores the old,  
And makes the fainting coward bold.

It lays the careful head to rest,  
Calms palpitations in the breast,  
Renders our lives' misfortune sweet ;  
. . . . .

Then let the chill Sirocco blow,  
And gird us round with hills of snow,  
Or else go whistle to the shore,  
And make the hollow mountains roar.

---

\* The preceding paragraph is omitted in the edition of 1845.—Ed.

- ‘ Whilst we together jovial sit  
Careless, and crowned with mirth and wit ;  
Where, though bleak winds confine us home,  
Our fancies round the world shall roam.
- ‘ We’ll think of all the Friends we know,  
And drink to all worth drinking to ;  
When having drunk all thine and mine,  
We rather shall want healths than wine.
- ‘ But where Friends fail us, we’ll supply  
Our friendships with our charity :  
Men that remote in sorrows live,  
Shall by our lusty brimmers thrive.
- ‘ We’ll drink the wanting into wealth,  
And those that languish into health,  
The afflicted into joy : th’ opprest  
Into security and rest.
- ‘ The worthy in disgrace shall find  
Favour return again more kind,  
And in restraint who stifled lie,  
Shall taste the air of liberty.
- ‘ The brave shall triumph in success,  
The lovers shall have mistresses,  
Poor unregarded Virtue, praise,  
And the neglected Poet, bays.
- ‘ Thus shall our healths do others good,  
Whilst we ourselves do all we would ;  
For, freed from envy and from care,  
What would we be but what we are ?’

It remains that I should express my regret at the necessity of separating my compositions from some beautiful Poems of Mr Coleridge, with which they have been long associated in publication. The feelings with which that joint publication was made, have been gratified ; its end is answered, and the time is come when considerations of general propriety dictate the separation. Three short pieces (now first published) are the work of a female Friend ; and the reader, to whom they may be acceptable, is indebted to me for his pleasure ; if any one regard them with dislike, or be disposed to condemn them, let the

censure fall upon him, who, trusting in his own sense of their merit and their fitness for the place which they occupy, *extorted* them from the authoress.\*

When I sat down to write this Preface, it was my intention to have made it more comprehensive ; but, thinking that I ought rather to apologise for detaining the reader so long, I will here conclude.

### ESSAY SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE.

WITH the young of both sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage : or it relaxes of itself ; the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation ; while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species of luxurious amusement. In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to Poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life, And, lastly, there are many, who, having been enamoured of this art in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature ; in which Poetry has continued to be comprehended *as a study*.

Into the above classes the readers of Poetry may be divided ; Critics abound in them all ; but from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new work. The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with Poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is

---

\* The preceding paragraph was omitted in the edition of 1845.—ED.



the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon Youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of Poetry (which nevertheless, if genuine, is as permanent as pure science) her appropriate employment, her privilege and her *duty*, is to treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear*; not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses*, and to the *passions*. What a world of delusion does this acknowledged obligation\* prepare for the inexperienced! what temptations to go astray are here held forth for them whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the understanding, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason!—When a juvenile reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common-sense suggest suspicions, a lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts—is ever at hand to justify extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable and, no doubt, eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations, the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the question could not be warded off, if Youth were incapable of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or, if these errors always terminated of themselves in due season. But, with the majority, though their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark; and, while there is no danger that what has been

---

\* In edd. 1820-1832, "this acknowledged principle."—ED.

said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are, at the same time, modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause;—that, having discontinued their attention to poetry, whatever progress may have been made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth. If, then, a new poem fall in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The Book was probably taken up after an escape from the burden of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.

If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the

unostentatious beauties of a pure style. In the higher Poetry, an enlightened Critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious, with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original work, the colouring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (*i.e.*, obey with zeal and fidelity) two masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two classes of readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But, as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive, that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to overrate the Authors by whom these truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's language,

that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they receive from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathise with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike; and the heart of the reader is set against the Author and his book.—To these excesses, they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions? Accordingly, believers of this cast are at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled, as they are, and must be, with inward misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious:—and at all seasons, they are under temptation to supply, by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity:—the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence; and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an “imperfect shadowing forth” of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burden upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a

process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommodates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between Religion and Poetry;—between Religion—making up the deficiencies of reason by faith; and Poetry—passionate for the instruction of reason, between Religion—whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription and reconciled to substitutions; and Poetry—ethereal and transcendent, yet incapable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error;—so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion,—than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb? For a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing anything of its quickness; and for active faculties capable of answering the demands which an Author of original imagination shall make upon them, associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by aught that is unworthy of it?—among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of Poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed—that, as this class comprehends the only judgments which are trustworthy, so does it include

the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mis-taught is worse than to be untaught; and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no errors are so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this class are contained censors, who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalise rightly, to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end; who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far; being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are found critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; men, who take upon them to report of the course which *he* holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany,—confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily ‘into the region;’—men of palsied imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid, who therefore feed as the many direct them, or, with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives;—judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a nature to have been made without reluctance; and, were it only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits—must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace

behind them : it will be further found, and when Authors shall have, at length, raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerning their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore ; if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select Spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigour to the enemies whom it provokes ;—a vivacious quality, ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over it ; and, from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical literature of this Country for the greater part of the last two centuries, and see if the facts support these inferences.

Who is there that can now endure to read “The Creation” of Dubartas ? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise ; he was caressed by kings ; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, “The Faery Queen” faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of some other writers, it must be pronounced small indeed.

‘The laurel meed of mighty conquerors  
And poets *sage*’

are his own words ; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy ; while its opposite, whether in the

shape of folly or madness, has been *their* best friend. But he was a great power; and bears a high name: the laurel has been awarded to him.

A dramatic Author, if he write for the stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakspeare was listened to. The people were delighted; but I am not sufficiently versed in stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic writers, that Shakspeare, like his predecessors, Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakspeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius, is, that he could turn to such glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be their reception on the stage, made little impression upon the ruling Intellects of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes



to him.\*—His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were acted for one of Shakspeare. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our nation: 'the English, with their buffon de Shakspeare,' is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakspeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet: for among us it is a current, I might say, an established opinion, that Shakspeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be 'a wild, irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties.' How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakspeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they

---

\* The learned Hakewill (a third edition of whose book bears date 1635), writing to refute the error 'touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay,' cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Bartas, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakspeare.

often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human Nature!

There is extant a small Volume of miscellaneous poems, in which Shakspeare expresses his own feelings in his own person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that Volume, the Sonnets; though in no part of the writings of this Poet is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of an act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of these little pieces,\* or any production of Shakspeare, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in them; and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions—'there sitting where he durst not soar.'

Nine years before the death of Shakspeare, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small Poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope, in his youth, could pilfer from them without risk of its being known. Whether these Poems are at this day justly appreciated I will not undertake to decide; nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of readers to suppose the contrary; seeing that a man of the acknowledged

---

\* This flippancy insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr Coleridge, in a course of Lectures upon Poetry, given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakspeare's Sonnets see Numbers 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

genius of Voss, the German Poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet they were little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the Sonnets, Dr Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Steevens wrote upon those of Shakspeare.

About the time when the Pindaric Odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr Johnson has strangely styled metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, The Paradise Lost made its appearance. 'Fit audience find though few,' was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked; this I believe to be true; but Dr Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton's Countrymen were '*just* to it' upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred copies were sold in two years; an uncommon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton's public conduct had excited. But, be it remembered that, if Milton's political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured him numerous friends; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the master-work of a man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. Take, from the number of purchasers, persons of this class, and also those who wished to possess the Poem as a religious work, and but few I fear would be left who sought for it on account of its poetical merits. The demand did not

immediately increase ; ‘ for,’ says Dr Johnson, ‘ many more readers’ (he means persons in the habit of reading Poetry) ‘ than were supplied at first the Nation did not afford.’ How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing title-pages to belie it ! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, seventh Edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman’s Poems, fourth Edition, 1686 ; Waller, fifth Edition, same date. The poems of Norris of Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know ; but I well remember, that, twenty-five years ago, the booksellers’ stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable man ; but merely to show—that, if Milton’s work was not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. The early editions of “The Paradise Lost” were printed in a shape which allowed them to be sold at a low price, yet only three thousand copies of the work were sold in eleven years ; and the nation, says Dr Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1644, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the works of Shakspeare ; which probably did not together make one thousand copies ; facts adduced by the critic to prove the ‘ paucity of readers.’ There were readers in multitudes ; but their money went for other purposes, as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorised, then, to affirm that the reception of *The Paradise Lost*, and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erroneous.\*—How amusing

---

\* Hughes is express upon this subject : in his dedication of Spenser’s Works to Lord Somers, he writes thus :—‘ It was your lordship’s encouraging a beautiful edition of *Paradise Lost* that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed.’

to shape to one's self such a critique as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the Miscellanies or trading Journalist of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this Poem, every where impregnated with *original* excellence.

So strange, indeed, are the obliquities of admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be tempted to think that there are no fixed principles\* in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honoured by being permitted to peruse, in MS., a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that century. It is the work of an English Peer of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his son. Perhaps nowhere does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are, throughout, equally conspicuous. Yet the author, selecting among the Poets of his own country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularises only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftesbury, an author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English Poet ever attained during his lifetime, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that the undue exertion of these arts is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature, from which, if he had not been seduced by an over-love of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the

---

\* This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his Eclogues with boyish inexperience, the praise, which these compositions obtained, tempted him into a belief that Nature was not to be trusted, at least in pastoral Poetry. To prove this by example, he put his friend Gay upon writing those Eclogues which the author intended to be burlesque. The instigator of the work, and his admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these Poems contain some detestable passages, the effect, as Dr Johnson well observes, 'of reality and truth became conspicuous, even when the intention was to show them grovelling and degraded.' The Pastorals, ludicrous to those who prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages, 'became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations.'

Something less than sixty years after the publication of *The Paradise Lost*, appeared Thomson's *Winter*; which was speedily followed by his other Seasons. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received? 'It was no sooner read,' said one of his contemporary biographers, 'than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for anything in Poetry, beyond a *point* of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *antithesis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an *elegiac* complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing anything new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a Poet,

who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became un-animous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man.'

This case appears to bear strongly against us:—but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a Poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting the nocturnal Reverie of Lady Winchelsea, and a passage or two in the Windsor Forest of Pope, the Poetry of the period intervening between the publication of *The Paradise Lost* and the *Seasons* does not contain a single new image of external nature; and scarcely presents a familiar one, from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the '*Iliad*.' A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless; \* those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide

---

\* *CORTES alone in a night-gown.*

All things are hushed as nature's self lay dead;  
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head.

him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten ; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation,—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive Poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity ? If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a Poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder Poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time holden in much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance ; and as the soil was *in such good condition* at the time of the publication of *The Seasons*, the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired poet, but he could not work miracles ; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little *more* ; though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception, that many would often fancy they recognised a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shown that much of what his biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment,—how is the rest to be accounted for ?—Thomson was

---

The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,  
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat :  
Even Lust and Envy sleep ; yet Love denies  
Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes.

DRYDEN'S *Indian Emperor*.



fortunate in the very title of his poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one; in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental common-places, that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well used copy of the Seasons the book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps Damon and Musidora); these also are prominent in our collections of Extracts; and are the parts of his Work, which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him 'an elegant and philosophical poet;' nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson's genius as an imaginative poet\* were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost forty years after the publication of the Seasons, pointed them out by a note in his Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope. In the Castle of Indolence (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious, and diction more pure. Yet that fine poem was neglected on its appearance, and is at this day the delight only of a few.

When Thomson died, Collins breathed forth his regrets in an Elegiac Poem, in which he pronounces a poetical curse upon *him* who should regard with insensibility the place where

---

\* Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the second edition of his Seasons, and find that even *that* does not contain the most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration; these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

the Poet's remains were deposited. The Poems of the mourner himself have now passed through innumerable editions, and are universally known; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his life-time was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and threw the edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the *Seasons* of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*; collected new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed by the Editor, Dr Percy. This work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales, that appeared not long after its publication; and had been modelled, as the authors persuaded themselves, after the old Ballad. The Compilation was, however, ill suited to the then existing taste of city society; and Dr Johnson, 'mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this country, into temporary neglect; while Bürger, and other able writers of Germany, were translating or imitating these *Reliques*, and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow

his genius into the regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of Sir Cauline, and by many other pieces), yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the Hermit of Warkworth, a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact \* with regret, esteeming the genius of Dr Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom in modern times it has been cultivated. That even Bürger (to whom Klopstock gave, in my hearing, a commendation which he denied to Goethe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last) had not the fine sensibility of Percy, might be shown from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

Now daye was gone, and night was come,  
 And all were fast asleepe,  
 All save the Lady Emeline,  
 Who sate in her bowre to weepe :  
 And soone she heard her true Love's voice  
 Low whispering at the walle,  
 'Awake, awake, my dear Ladye  
 'Tis I thy true-love call.'

Which is thus tricked out and dilated :—

Als nun die Nacht Gebirg' und Thal  
 Vermummt in Rabenschatten,  
 Und Hochburgs Lampen überall  
 Schon ausgeflimmert hatten,

---

\* Shenstone, in his *Schoolmistress*, gives a still more remarkable instance of this timidity. On its first appearance (See Disraeli's second series of *The Curiosities of Literature*), the Poem was accompanied with an absurd prose commentary, showing, as indeed some incongruous expressions in the text imply, that the whole was intended for burlesque. In subsequent editions, the commentary was dropped, and the People have since continued to read in seriousness, doing for the Author what he had not courage openly to venture upon for himself.

Und alles tief entschlafen war;  
 Doch nur das Fräulein immerdar,  
 Voll Fieberangst, noch wachte,  
 Und seinen Ritter dachte:  
 Da horch! Ein süßer Liebeston  
 Kam leis' empor geflogen.  
 "Ho, Trüdchen, ho! Da bin ich schon!  
 Frisch auf! Dich angezogen!"

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail, Macpherson! hail to thee, Sire of Ossian! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition—it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The Editor of the "Reliques" had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention, by not concealing that his supplementary labours were considerable! how selfish his conduct, contrasted with that of the disinterested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance! Open this far-famed Book! I have done so at random, and the beginning of the "Epic Poem Temora," in eight Books, presents itself. 'The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Gray torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king: the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds.' Precious memorandums from the pocket-book of the blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely-spread reputation,

without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion. Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature everything is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work it is exactly the reverse; everything (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened,—yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied; when, with the steeps of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Car-borne heroes;—of Morven, which, if one may judge of its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface.—Mr Malcolm Laing has ably shown that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his very “*ands*” and his “*buts!*” and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a *conscious* plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, and Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them;

unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Staël, that many of the characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English Poets are derived from the ancient Fingallian; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own. It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland;—a country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns. These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as these pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly uninfluential upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no Author, in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them—except the boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a magazine with *Saxon Poems*,—counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island, is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless.—Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the Reliques of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions!—I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own country, its Poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the

present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the Reliques ; I know that it is so with my friends ; and, for myself, I am happy on this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces, biographical and critical, for the works of some of the most eminent English Poets. The booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection : they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their books of accounts ; and decided upon the claim of authors to be admitted into a body of the most eminent, from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits, which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the *first* name we find is that of Cowley !—What is become of the morning-star of English Poetry ? Where is the bright Elizabethan constellation ? Or, if names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chaucer ? where is Spenser ? where Sidney ? and, lastly, where he, whose rights as a Poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a Dramatist, we have vindicated,—where Shakspeare ? These and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have *not*. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made, as in this case before us ?) Roscommon, and Stepney, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt—Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Con-

greve, Broome, and other reputed Magnates ; metrical writers utterly worthless and useless, except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence what a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced in the former part of this Essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking to declare them ; but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these Volumes ? The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when some of these pieces were first published, seventeen years ago ; who has also observed to what degree the poetry of this Island has since that period been coloured by them ; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of Fame has been given : and, as far as concerns myself, I have cause to be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which these Poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind, from which they have proceeded, and the labour and pains which, when labour and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them, must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general impression, though widely



different in value:—they are all proofs that for the present time I have not laboured in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of poetical Works, it is this,—that every author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them;—and much he will have in common; but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road:—he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original Poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience? Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the reader of the pride that induces him to dwell upon those points wherein men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all men are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on men who stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of readers by which they are

to be humbled and humanised, in order that they may be purified and exalted.

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of *knowledge*, it does *not* lie here. TASTE, I would remind the reader, like IMAGINATION, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive,—to intellectual *acts* and *operations*. The word, Imagination, has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of Taste, the process has been reversed ; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable,—being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy,—which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word, Imagination : but the word, Taste, has been stretched to the sense that it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste may be trusted ; it is competent to this office ;—for in its intercourse with these the mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleasurably as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination ; or, in ordinary language, the pathetic and the sublime ;—are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the

metaphor—*Taste*. And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operating *power* in the mind of the reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse, elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies *suffering*: but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact, that, in popular language, to be in a passion, is to be angry! But,

‘ Anger in hasty *words* or *blows*  
Itself discharges on its foes.’

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasureable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid,—and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original writer, at his first appearance in the world. Of genius the only proof is, the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before: of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a

manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the Poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince or general—stretched on his palanquin, and borne by his slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspirited by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore, to create Taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and *there* lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem—that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true poet will be found passages of that species of excellence, which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct, and others—that are complex and revolutionary; some—to which the heart yields with gentleness; others—against which it struggles with pride: these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the constitutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in Poetry, the heart is to be affected—is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius of the Poet melts these down for his purpose; but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human pathos; an enthusiastic as well as an ordinary, sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself—but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime,—if we consider what are the cares

that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity, in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a Poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word *popular*, applied to new works in Poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all men should run after its productions, as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell!—The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the world into attention by their audacity and extravagance; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind, lying upon the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity, and the fancy amused without the trouble of thought. But in every thing which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power;—wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination; wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the Poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity, which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic annunciation of the remotest future, *there* the Poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers. Grand thoughts; (and Shakspeare must often have sighed over this truth) as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits, without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and

kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing—that there never has been a period, and perhaps never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous admiration, and been far more generally read, than good; but this advantage attends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age; whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal, the individual quickly *perishes*; the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty—with adaptation, more or less skilful, to the changing humours of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole, that, in the opinion of the writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and, could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and, their eulogium pronounced by implication, when it was said, above—that, of *good* poetry, the *individual*, as well as the species, *survives*. And how doth it survive but through the People? what preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

—‘Past and future, are the wings  
On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,  
Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge’——

MS.

The voice that issues from this Spirit, is that Vox Populi which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclamation, or a transitory outcry—transitory though it be for years, local though from a Nation.

Still more lamentable is his error who can believe that there is any thing of divine infallibility in the clamour of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the PUBLIC, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the PEOPLE. Towards the Public, the writer hopes that he feels as much deference as it is entitled to: but to the People, philosophically characterized, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily; and, this done, takes leave of his Readers, by assuring them—that, if he were not persuaded that the contents of these Volumes, and the Work to which they are subsidiary, evince something of the ‘Vision and the Faculty divine;’ and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree, to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honour, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction;—from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been.—1815.

## POSTSCRIPT.

1835.

IN the present volume, as in those that have preceded it, the reader will have found occasionally opinions expressed upon the course of public affairs, and feelings given vent to as national interests excited them. Since nothing, I trust, has been uttered but in the spirit of reflective patriotism, those

notices are left to produce their own effect ; but, among the many objects of general concern, and the changes going forward, which I have glanced at in verse, are some especially affecting the lower orders of society : in reference to these, I wish here to add a few words in plain prose.

Were I conscious of being able to do justice to those important topics, I might avail myself of the periodical press for offering anonymously my thoughts, such as they are, to the world ; but I feel that in procuring attention, they may derive some advantage, however small, from my name, in addition to that of being presented in a less fugitive shape. It is also not impossible that the state of mind which some of the foregoing poems may have produced in the reader, will dispose him to receive more readily the impression which I desire to make, and to admit the conclusions I would establish.

I. The first thing that presses upon my attention is the Poor-Law Amendment Act. I am aware of the magnitude and complexity of the subject, and the unwearied attention which it has received from men of far wider experience than my own ; yet I cannot forbear touching upon one point of it, and to this I will confine myself, though not insensible to the objection which may reasonably be brought against treating a portion of this, or any other, great scheme of civil polity separately from the whole. The point to which I wish to draw the reader's attention is, that *all* persons who cannot find employment, or procure wages sufficient to support the body in health and strength, are entitled to a maintenance by law.

This dictate of humanity is acknowledged in the Report of the Commissioners : but is there not room for apprehension that some of the regulations of the new act have a tendency to render the principle nugatory by difficulties thrown in the way of applying it ? If this be so, persons



will not be wanting to show it, by examining the provisions of the act in detail,—an attempt which would be quite out of place here ; but it will not, therefore, be deemed unbecoming in one who fears that the prudence of the head may, in framing some of those provisions, have supplanted the wisdom of the heart, to enforce a principle which cannot be violated without infringing upon one of the most precious rights of the English people, and opposing one of the most sacred claims of civilised humanity.

There can be no greater error, in this department of legislation, than the belief that this principle does by necessity operate for the degradation of those who claim, or are so circumstanced as to make it likely they may claim, through laws founded upon it, relief or assistance. The direct contrary is the truth : it may be unanswerably maintained that its tendency is to raise, not to depress ; by stamping a value upon life, which can belong to it only where the laws have placed men who are willing to work, and yet cannot find employment, above the necessity of looking for protection against hunger and other natural evils, either to individual and casual charity, to despair and death, or to the breach of law by theft, or violence.

And here, as, in the Report of the Commissioners, the fundamental principle has been recognised, I am not at issue with them any farther than I am compelled to believe that their ‘remedial measures’ obstruct the application of it more than the interests of society require.

And, calling to mind the doctrines of political economy which are now prevalent, I cannot forbear to enforce the justice of the principle, and to insist upon its salutary operation.

And first for its justice : If self-preservation be the first law of our nature, would not every one in a state of nature be morally justified in taking to himself that which is indis-

pensable to such preservation, where, by so doing, he would not rob another of that which might be equally indispensable to *his* preservation? And if the value of life be regarded in a right point of view, may it not be questioned whether this right of preserving life, at any expense short of endangering the life of another, does not survive man's entering into the social state; whether this right can be surrendered or forfeited, except when it opposes the divine law, upon any supposition of a social compact, or of any convention for the protection of mere rights of property?

But, if it be not safe to touch the abstract question of man's right in a social state to help himself even in the last extremity, may we not still contend for the duty of a christian government, standing *in loco parentis* towards all its subjects, to make such effectual provision, that no one shall be in danger of perishing either through the neglect or harshness of its legislation? Or, waiving this, is it not indisputable that the claim of the state to the allegiance, involves the protection, of the subject? And, as all rights in one party impose a correlative duty upon another, it follows that the right of the state to require the services of its members, even to the jeoparding of their lives in the common defence, establishes a right in the people (not to be gainsaid by utilitarians and economists) to public support when, from any cause, they may be unable to support themselves.

Let us now consider the salutary and benign operation of this principle. Here we must have recourse to elementary feelings of human nature, and to truths which from their very obviousness are apt to be slighted, till they are forced upon our notice by our own sufferings or those of others. In the *Paradise Lost*, Milton represents Adam, after the Fall, as exclaiming in the anguish of his soul—

‘ Did I request Thee, Maker, from my clay  
To mould me man ; did I solicit Thee

From darkness to promote me ?  
 . . . . . My will  
 Concurred not to my being.'

Under how many various pressures of misery have men been driven thus, in a strain touching upon impiety, to expostulate with the Creator ! and under few so afflictive as when the source and origin of earthly existence have been brought back to the mind by its impending close in the pangs of destitution. But as long as, in our legislation, due weight shall be given to this principle, no man will be forced to bewail the gift of life in hopeless want of the necessities of life.

Englishmen have, therefore, by the progress of civilisation among them, been placed in circumstances more favourable to piety and resignation to the divine will, than the inhabitants of other countries, where a like provision has not been established. And as Providence, in this care of our countrymen, acts through a human medium, the objects of that care must, in like manner, be more inclined towards a grateful love of their fellow-men. Thus, also, do stronger ties attach the people to their country, whether while they tread its soil, or, at a distance, think of their native land as an indulgent parent, to whose arms, even they who have been imprudent and undeserving may, like the prodigal son, betake themselves, without fear of being rejected.

Such is the view of the case that would first present itself to a reflective mind ; and it is in vain to show, by appeals to experience, in contrast with this view, that provisions founded upon the principle have promoted profaneness of life, and dispositions the reverse of philanthropic, by spreading idleness, selfishness, and rapacity : for these evils have arisen, not as an inevitable consequence of the principle, but for want of judgment in framing laws based upon it ; and, above all, from faults in the mode of administering the law. The

mischief that has grown to such a height from granting relief in cases where proper vigilance would have shown that it was not required, or in bestowing it in undue measure, will be urged by no truly enlightened statesman, as a sufficient reason for banishing the principle itself from legislation.

Let us recur to the miserable states of consciousness that it precludes.

There is a story told, by a traveller in Spain, of a female who, by a sudden shock of domestic calamity, was driven out of her senses, and ever after looked up incessantly to the sky, feeling that her fellow-creatures could do nothing for her relief. Can there be Englishmen who, with a good end in view, would, upon system, expose their brother Englishmen to a like necessity of looking upwards only; or downwards to the earth, after it shall contain no spot where the destitute can demand, by civil right, what by right of nature they are entitled to?

Suppose the objects of our sympathy not sunk into this blank despair, but wandering about as strangers in streets and ways, with the hope of succour from casual charity; what have we gained by such a change of scene? Woful is the condition of the famished Northern Indian, dependent, among winter snows, upon the chance-passage of a herd of deer, from which one, if brought down by his rifle gun, may be made the means of keeping him and his companions alive. As miserable is that of some savage Islander, who, when the land has ceased to afford him sustenance, watches for food which the waves may cast up, or in vain endeavours to extract it from the inexplorable deep. But neither of these is in a state of wretchedness comparable to that, which is so often endured in civilised society: multitudes, in all ages, have known it, of whom may be said:—

‘Homeless, near a thousand homes they stood,  
And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food.’

Justly might I be accused of wasting time in an uncalled-for attempt to excite the feelings of the reader, if systems of political economy, widely spread, did not impugn the principle, and if the safeguards against such extremities were left unimpaired. It is broadly asserted by many, that every man who endeavours to find work, *may* find it: were this assertion capable of being verified, there still would remain a question, what kind of work, and how far may the labourer be fit for it? For if sedentary work is to be exchanged for standing; and some light and nice exercise of the fingers, to which an artisan has been accustomed all his life, for severe labour of the arms; the best efforts would turn to little account, and occasion would be given for the unthinking and the unfeeling unwarrantably to reproach those who are put upon such employment, as idle, froward, and unworthy of relief, either by law or in any other way! Were this statement correct, there would indeed be an end of the argument, the principle here maintained would be superseded. But, alas! it is far otherwise. That principle, applicable to the benefit of all countries, is indispensable for England, upon whose coast families are perpetually deprived of their support by shipwreck, and where large masses of men are so liable to be thrown out of their ordinary means of gaining bread, by changes in commercial intercourse, subject mainly or solely to the will of foreign powers; by new discoveries in arts and manufactures; and by reckless laws, in conformity with theories of political economy, which, whether right or wrong in the abstract, have proved a scourge to tens of thousands, by the abruptness with which they have been carried into practice.

But it is urged,—refuse altogether compulsory relief to the able-bodied, and the number of those who stand in need of relief will steadily diminish through a conviction of an absolute necessity for greater forethought, and more prudent

care of a man's earnings. Undoubtedly it would, but so also would it, and in much greater degree, if the legislative provisions were retained and parochial relief administered under the care of the upper classes, as it ought to be. For it has been invariably found, that wherever the funds have been raised and applied under the superintendence of gentlemen and substantial proprietors, acting in vestries, and as overseers, pauperism has diminished accordingly. Proper care in that quarter would effectually check what is felt in some districts to be one of the worst evils in the poor law system, viz. the readiness of small and needy proprietors to join in imposing rates that seemingly subject them to great hardships, while, in fact, this is done with a mutual understanding, that the relief each is ready to bestow upon his still poorer neighbours will be granted to himself, or his relatives, should it hereafter be applied for.

But let us look to inner sentiments of a nobler quality, in order to know what we have to build upon. Affecting proofs occur in every one's experience, who is acquainted with the unfortunate and the indigent, of their unwillingness to derive their subsistence from aught but their own funds or labour, or to be indebted to parochial assistance for the attainment of any object, however dear to them. A case was reported, the other day, from a coroner's inquest, of a pair who, through the space of four years, had carried about their dead infant from house to house, and from lodging to lodging, as their necessities drove them, rather than ask the parish to bear the expense of its interment:—the poor creatures lived in the hope of one day being able to bury their child at their own cost. It must have been heart-rending to see and hear the mother, who had been called upon to account for the state in which the body was found, make this deposition. By some, judging coldly, if not harshly, this conduct might be imputed to an unwarrant-

able pride, as she and her husband had, it is true, been once in prosperity. But examples where the spirit of independence works with equal strength, though not with like miserable accompaniments, are frequently to be found even yet among the humblest peasantry and mechanics. There is not, then, sufficient cause for doubting that a like sense of honour may be revived among the people, and their ancient habits of independence restored, without resorting to those severities which the new Poor Law Act has introduced.

But even if the surfaces of things only are to be examined, we have a right to expect that lawgivers should take into account the various tempers and dispositions of mankind; while some are led, by the existence of a legislative provision, into idleness and extravagance, the economical virtues might be cherished in others by the knowledge that, if all their efforts fail, they have in the Poor Laws a 'refuge from the storm and a shadow from the heat.' Despondency and distraction are no friends to prudence: the springs of industry will relax, if cheerfulness be destroyed by anxiety; without hope men become reckless and have a sullen pride in adding to the heap of their own wretchedness. He who feels that he is abandoned by his fellow-men will be almost irresistibly driven to care little for himself; will lose his self-respect accordingly, and with that loss what remains to him of virtue?

With all due deference to the particular experience, and general intelligence of the individuals who framed the Act, and of those who in and out of parliament have approved of and supported it; it may be said, that it proceeds too much upon the presumption that it is a labouring man's own fault if he be not, as the phrase is, beforehand with the world. But the most prudent are liable to be thrown back by sickness, cutting them off from labour, and causing to them expense: and who but has observed how distress creeps upon

multitudes without misconduct of their own; and merely from a gradual fall in the price of labour, without a correspondent one in the price of provisions; so that men who may have ventured upon the marriage state with a fair prospect of maintaining their families in comfort and happiness, see them reduced to a pittance which no effort of theirs can increase? Let it be remembered, also, that there are thousands with whom vicious habits of expense are not the cause why they do not store up their gains; but they are generous and kind-hearted, and ready to help their kindred and friends; moreover, they have a faith in Providence that those who have been prompt to assist others, will not be left destitute, should they themselves come to need. By acting from these blended feelings, numbers have rendered themselves incapable of standing up against a sudden reverse. Nevertheless, these men, in common with all who have the misfortune to be in want, if many theorists had their wish, would be thrown upon one or other of those three sharp points of condition before adverted to, from which the intervention of law has hitherto saved them.

All that has been said tends to show how the principle contended for makes the gift of life more valuable, and has, it may be hoped, led to the conclusion that its legitimate operation is to make men worthier of that gift: in other words, not to degrade but to exalt human nature. But the subject must not be dismissed without adverting to the indirect influence of the same principle upon the moral sentiments of a people among whom it is embodied in law. In our criminal jurisprudence there is a maxim, deservedly eulogised, that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape, than that one innocent man should suffer; so, also, might it be maintained with regard to the Poor Laws, that it is better for the interests of humanity among the people at large, that ten undeserving should partake of the funds pro-



vided, than that one morally good man, through want of relief, should either have his principles corrupted, or his energies destroyed ; than that such a one should either be driven to do wrong, or be cast to the earth in utter hopelessness. In France, the English maxim of criminal jurisprudence is reversed ; there, it is deemed better that ten innocent men should suffer, than one guilty escape : in France, there is no universal provision for the poor ; and we may judge of the small value set upon human life in the metropolis of that country, by merely noticing the disrespect with which, after death, the body is treated, not by the thoughtless vulgar, but in schools of anatomy, presided over by men allowed to be, in their own art and in physical science, among the most enlightened in the world. In the East, where countries are overrun with population as with a weed, infinitely more respect is shown to the remains of the deceased ; and what a bitter mockery is it, that this insensibility should be found where civil polity is so busy in minor regulations, and ostentatiously careful to gratify the luxurious propensities, whether social or intellectual, of the multitude ! Irreligion is, no doubt, much concerned with this offensive disrespect, shown to the bodies of the dead in France ; but it is mainly attributable to the state in which so many of the living are left by the absence of compulsory provision for the indigent so humanely established by the law of England.

Sights of abject misery, perpetually recurring, harden the heart of the community. In the perusal of history, and of works of fiction, we are not, indeed, unwilling to have our commiseration excited by such objects of distress as they present to us ; but in the concerns of real life, men know that such emotions are not given to be indulged for their own sakes : there, the conscience declares to them that sympathy must be followed by action ; and if there exist a

previous conviction that the power to relieve is utterly inadequate to the demand, the eye shrinks from communication with wretchedness, and pity and compassion languish, like any other qualities that are deprived of their natural aliment. Let these considerations be duly weighed by those who trust to the hope that an increase of private charity, with all its advantages of superior discrimination, would more than compensate for the abandonment of those principles, the wisdom of which has been here insisted upon. How discouraging, also, would be the sense of injustice, which could not fail to arise in the minds of the well-disposed, if the burden of supporting the poor, a burden of which the selfish have hitherto by compulsion borne a share, should now, or hereafter, be thrown exclusively upon the benevolent.

By having put an end to the Slave Trade and Slavery, the British people are exalted in the scale of humanity; and they cannot but feel so, if they look into themselves, and duly consider their relation to God and their fellow-creatures. That was a noble advance; but a retrograde movement will assuredly be made, if ever the principle, which has been here defended, should be either avowedly abandoned or but ostensibly retained.

But after all, there may be a little reason to apprehend permanent injury from any experiment that may be tried. On the one side will be human nature rising up in her own defence, and on the other prudential selfishness acting to the same purpose, from a conviction that, without a compulsory provision for the exigencies of the labouring multitude, that degree of ability to regulate the price of labour, which is indispensable for the reasonable interest of arts and manufactures, cannot, in Great Britain, be upheld.

II. In a poem of the foregoing collection, allusion is made to the state of the workmen congregated in manufactories.

In order to relieve many of the evils to which that class of society are subject and to establish a better harmony between them and their employers, it would be well to repeal such laws as prevent the formation of joint-stock companies. There are, no doubt, many and great obstacles to the formation and salutary working of these societies, inherent in the mind of those whom they would obviously benefit. But the combinations of masters to keep down, unjustly, the price of labour would be fairly checked by them, as far as they were practicable; they would encourage economy, inasmuch as they would enable a man to draw profit from his savings, by investing them in buildings or machinery for processes of manufacture with which he was habitually connected. His little capital would then be working for him while he was at rest or asleep; he would more clearly perceive the necessity of capital for carrying on great works; he would better learn to respect the larger portions of it in the hands of others; he would be less tempted to join in unjust combinations; and, for the sake of his own property, if not for higher reasons, he would be slow to promote local disturbance, or endanger public tranquillity; he would, at least, be loth to act in that way *knowingly*: for it is not to be denied that such societies might be nurseries of opinions unfavourable to a mixed constitution of government, like that of Great Britain. The democratic and republican spirit which they might be apt to foster would not, however, be dangerous in itself, but only as it might act without being sufficiently counterbalanced, either by landed proprietorship, or by a Church extending itself so as to embrace an ever-growing and ever-shifting population of mechanics and artisans. But if the tendencies of such societies would be to make the men prosper who might belong to them, rulers and legislators should rejoice in the result, and do their duty to the state by upholding and extending the influence of that

Church to which it owes, in so great a measure, its safety, its prosperity, and its glory.

This, in the temper of the present times, may be difficult, but it is become indispensable, since large towns in great numbers have sprung up, and others have increased tenfold, with little or no dependence upon the gentry and the landed proprietors; and apart from those mitigated feudal institutions, which, till of late, have acted so powerfully upon the composition of the House of Commons. Now it may be affirmed that, in quarters where there is not an attachment to the Church, or the landed aristocracy, and a pride in supporting them, *there* the people will dislike both, and be ready, upon such incitements as are perpetually recurring, to join in attempts to overthrow them. There is no neutral ground here: from want of due attention to the state of society in large towns and manufacturing districts, and ignorance or disregard of these obvious truths, innumerable well-meaning persons became zealous supporters of a Reform Bill, the qualities and powers of which, whether destructive or constructive, they would otherwise have been afraid of; and even the framers of that bill, swayed as they might be by party resentments and personal ambition, could not have gone so far, had not they too been lamentably ignorant or neglectful of the same truths both of fact and philosophy.

But let that pass; and let no opponent of the bill be tempted to compliment his own foresight, by exaggerating the mischiefs and dangers that have sprung from it: let not time be wasted in profitless regrets; and let those party distinctions vanish to their very names that have separated men who, whatever course they may have pursued, have ever had a bond of union in the wish to save the limited monarchy, and those other institutions that have, under Providence, rendered for so long a period of time this

country the happiest and worthiest of which there is any record since the foundation of civil society.

III. A philosophic mind is best pleased when looking at religion in its spiritual bearing; as a guide of conduct, a solace under affliction, and a support amid the instabilities of mortal life: but the Church having been forcibly brought by political considerations to my notice, while treating of the labouring classes, I cannot forbear saying a few words upon that momentous topic.

There is a loud clamour for extensive change in that department. The clamour would be entitled to more respect if they who are the most eager to swell it with their voices were not generally the most ignorant of the real state of the Church, and the service it renders to the community. *Reform* is the word employed. Let us pause and consider what sense it is apt to carry, and how things are confounded by a lax use of it. The great religious Reformation, in the sixteenth century, did not profess to be a new construction, but a restoration of something fallen into decay, or put out of sight. That familiar and justifiable use of the word seems to have paved the way for fallacies with respect to the term reform, which it is difficult to escape from. Were we to speak of improvement, and the correction of abuses, we should run less risk of being deceived ourselves, or of misleading others. We should be less likely to fall blindly into the belief, that the change demanded is a renewal of something that has existed before, and, that, therefore, we have experience on our side; nor should we be equally tempted to beg the question, that the change for which we are eager must be advantageous. From generation to generation, men are the dupes of words; and it is painful to observe, that so many of our species are most tenacious of those opinions which they have formed with the

least consideration. They who are the readiest to meddle with public affairs, whether in church or state, fly to generalities, that they may be eased from the trouble of thinking about particulars; and thus is deputed to mechanical instrumentality the work which vital knowledge only can do well.

“Abolish pluralities, have a resident incumbent in every parish,” is a favourite cry; but, without adverting to other obstacles in the way of this specious scheme, it may be asked what benefit would accrue from its *indiscriminate* adoption to counterbalance the harm it would introduce, by nearly extinguishing the order of curates, unless the revenues of the church should grow with the population, and be greatly increased in many thinly peopled districts, especially among the parishes of the North.

The order of curates is so beneficial, that some particular notice of it seems to be required in this place. For a church poor as, relatively to the numbers of people, that of England is, and probably will continue to be, it is no small advantage to have youthful servants, who will work upon the wages of hope and expectation. Still more advantageous is it to have, by means of this order, young men scattered over the country, who being more detached from the temporal concerns of the benefice, have more leisure for improvement and study, and are less subject to be brought into secular collision with those who are under their spiritual guardianship. The curate, if he reside at a distance from the incumbent, undertakes the requisite responsibilities of a temporal kind, in that modified way which prevents him, as a new-comer, from being charged with selfishness: while it prepares him for entering upon a benefice of his own, with something of a suitable experience. If he should act under and in co-operation with a resident incumbent, the gain is mutual. His studies will probably be assisted; and his

training, managed by a superior, will not be liable to relapse in matters of prudence, seemliness, or in any of the highest cares of his functions; and by way of return for these benefits to the pupil, it will often happen that the zeal of a middle-aged or declining incumbent will be revived, by being in near communion with the ardour of youth, when his own efforts may have languished through a melancholy consciousness that they have not produced as much good among his flock as, when he first entered upon the charge, he fondly hoped.

Let one remark, and that not the least important, be added. A curate, entering for the first time upon his office, comes from college after a course of expense, and with such inexperience in the use of money, that, in his new situation, he is apt to fall unawares into pecuniary difficulties. If this happens to him, much more likely is it to happen to the youthful incumbent; whose relations to his parishioners and to society, are more complicated; and, his income being larger and independent of another, a costlier style of living is required of him by public opinion. If embarrassment should ensue, and with that unavoidably some loss of respectability, his future usefulness will be proportionably impaired: not so with the curate, for he can easily remove and start afresh with a stock of experience and an unblemished reputation; whereas the early indiscretions of an incumbent being rarely forgotten, may be impediments to the efficacy of his ministry for the remainder of his life. The same observations would apply with equal force to doctrine. A young minister is liable to errors, from his notions being either too lax or overstrained. In both cases it would prove injurious that the errors should be remembered, after study and reflection, with advancing years, shall have brought him to a clearer discernment of the truth, and better judgment in the application of it.

It must be acknowledged that, among the regulations of ecclesiastical polity, none at first view are more attractive than that which prescribes for every parish a resident incumbent. How agreeable to picture one's self, as has been done by poets and romance-writers, from Chaucer down to Goldsmith, a man devoted to his ministerial office, with not a wish or a thought ranging beyond the circuit of its cares! Nor is it in poetry and fiction only that such characters are found; they are scattered, it is hoped not sparingly, over real life, especially in sequestered and rural districts, where there is but small influx of new inhabitants, and little change of occupation. The spirit of the Gospel, unaided by acquisitions of profane learning and experience in the world,—that spirit, and the obligations of the sacred office may, in such situations, suffice to effect most of what is needful. But for the complex state of society that prevails in England, much more is required, both in large towns and in many extensive districts of the country. A minister there should not only be irreproachable in manners and morals, but accomplished in learning, as far as is possible without sacrifice of the least of his pastoral duties. As necessary, perhaps more so, is it that he should be a citizen as well as a scholar; thoroughly acquainted with the structure of society, and the constitution of civil government, and able to reason upon both with the most expert; all ultimately in order to support the truths of Christianity, and to diffuse its blessings.

A young man coming fresh from the place of his education, cannot have brought with him these accomplishments; and if the scheme of equalising church incomes, which many advisers are much bent upon, be realised, so that there should be little or no secular inducement for a clergyman to desire a removal from the spot where he may chance to have been first set down; surely not only opportunities for



obtaining the requisite qualifications would be diminished, but the motives for desiring to obtain them would be proportionably weakened. And yet these qualifications are indispensable for the diffusion of that knowledge, by which alone the political philosophy of the New Testament can be rightly expounded, and its precepts adequately enforced. In these times, when the press is daily exercising so great a power over the minds of the people, for wrong or for right as may happen, *that* preacher ranks among the first of benefactors who, without stooping to the direct treatment of current politics and passing events, can furnish infallible guidance through the delusions that surround them; and who, appealing to the sanctions of Scripture, may place the grounds of its injunctions in so clear a light, that disaffection shall cease to be cultivated as a laudable propensity, and loyalty cleansed from the dishonour of a blind and prostrate obedience.

It is not, however, in regard to civic duties alone, that this knowledge in a minister of the Gospel is important; it is still more so for softening and subduing private and personal discontents. In all places, and at all times, men have gratuitously troubled themselves, because their survey of the dispensations of Providence has been partial and narrow; but now that readers are so greatly multiplied, men judge as they are *taught*, and repinings are engendered everywhere, by imputations being cast upon the government: and are prolonged or aggravated by being ascribed to misconduct or injustice in rulers, when the individual himself only is in fault. If a Christian pastor be competent to deal with these humours, as they may be dealt with, and by no members of society so successfully, both from more frequent and more favourable opportunities of intercourse, and by aid of the authority with which he speaks; he will be a teacher of moderation, a dispenser of the wisdom that blunts approaching

distress by submission to God's will, and lightens, by patience, grievances which cannot be removed.

We live in times when nothing, of public good at least, is generally acceptable, but what we believe can be traced to preconceived intention, and specific acts and formal contrivances of human understanding. A Christian instructor thoroughly accomplished would be a standing restraint upon such presumptuousness of judgment, by impressing the truth that—

In the unreasoning progress of the world  
A wiser spirit is at work for us,  
A better eye than ours. M.S.

Revelation points to the purity and peace of a future world; but our sphere of duty is upon earth; and the relations of impure and conflicting things to each other must be understood, or we shall be perpetually going wrong, in all but goodness of intention; and goodness of intention will itself relax through frequent disappointment. How desirable, then, is it, that a minister of the Gospel should be versed in the knowledge of existing facts, and be accustomed to a wide range of social experience! Nor is it less desirable for the purpose of counterbalancing and tempering in his own mind that ambition with which spiritual power is as apt to be tainted as any other species of power which men covet or possess.

It must be obvious that the scope of the argument is to discourage an attempt which would introduce into the Church of England an equality of income, and station, upon the model of that of Scotland. The sounder part of the Scottish nation know what good their ancestors derived from their church, and feel how deeply the living generation is indebted to it. They respect and love it, as accommodated in so great a measure to a comparatively poor country, through the far greater portion of which prevails a uniformity of employment; but the acknowledged deficiency

of theological learning among the clergy of that church is easily accounted for by this very equality. What else may be wanting there, it would be unpleasant to inquire, and might prove invidious to determine: one thing, however, is clear, that in all countries the temporalities of the Church Establishment should bear an analogy to the state of society, otherwise it cannot diffuse its influence through the whole community. In a country so rich and luxurious as England, the character of its clergy must unavoidably sink, and their influence be everywhere impaired, if individuals from the upper ranks, and men of leading talents, are to have no inducements to enter into that body but such as are purely spiritual. And this 'tinge of secularity' is no reproach to the clergy, nor does it imply a deficiency of spiritual endowments. Parents and guardians, looking forward to sources of honourable maintenance for their children and wards, often direct their thoughts early towards the church, being determined partly by outward circumstances, and partly by indications of seriousness, or intellectual fitness. It is natural that a boy or youth, with such a prospect before him, should turn his attention to those studies, and be led into those habits of reflection, which will in some degree tend to prepare him for the duties he is hereafter to undertake. As he draws nearer to the time when he will be called to these duties, he is both led and compelled to examine the Scriptures. He becomes more and more sensible of their truth. Devotion grows in him; and what might begin in temporal considerations, will end (as in a majority of instances we trust it does) in a spiritual-mindedness not unworthy of that Gospel, the lessons of which he is to teach, and the faith of which he is to inculcate. Not inappositely may be here repeated an observation which, from its obviousness and importance, must have been frequently made, viz. that the impoverishing of the clergy,

and bringing their incomes much nearer to a level, would not cause them to become less worldly-minded : the emoluments, howsoever reduced, would be as eagerly sought for, but by men from lower classes in society ; men who, by their manners, habits, abilities, and the scanty measure of their attainments, would unavoidably be less fitted for their station, and less competent to discharge its duties.

Visionary notions have in all ages been afloat upon the subject of best providing for the clergy ; notions which have been sincerely entertained by good men, with a view to the improvement of that order, and eagerly caught at and dwelt upon, by the designing, for its degradation and disparagement. Some are beguiled by what they call the *voluntary system*, not seeing (what stares one in the very face at the very threshold) that they who stand in most need of religious instruction are unconscious of the want, and therefore cannot reasonably be expected to make any sacrifices in order to supply it. Will the licentious, the sensual, and the depraved, take from the means of their gratifications and pursuits, to support a discipline that cannot advance without uprooting the trees that bear the fruit which they devour so greedily ? Will *they* pay the price of that seed whose harvest is to be reaped in an invisible world ? A voluntary system for the religious exigencies of a people numerous and circumstanced as we are ! Not more absurd would it be to expect that a knot of boys should draw upon the pittance of their pocket money to build schools, or out of the abundance of their discretion be able to select fit masters to teach and keep them in order ! Some, who clearly perceive the incompetence and folly of such a scheme for the agricultural part of the people, nevertheless think it feasible in large towns, where the rich might subscribe for the religious instruction of the poor. Alas ! they know little of the thick darkness that spreads over the streets and alleys of our large

towns. The parish of Lambeth, a few years since, contained not more than one church, and three or four small proprietary chapels, while dissenting chapels of every denomination were still more scantily found there ; yet the inhabitants of the parish amounted at that time to upwards of 50,000. Were the parish church and the chapels of the Establishment existing there, an *impediment* to the spread of the Gospel among that mass of people ? Who shall dare to say so ? But if any one, in the face of the fact which has just been stated, and in opposition to authentic reports to the same effect from various other quarters, should still contend, that a voluntary system is sufficient for the spread and maintenance of religion, we would ask, what kind of religion ? wherein would it differ, among the many, from deplorable fanaticism ?

For the preservation of the Church Establishment, all men whether they belong to it or not, could they perceive their true interest, would be strenuous ; but how inadequate are its provisions for the needs of the country ! and how much is it to be regretted that, while its zealous friends yield to alarms on account of the hostility of dissent, they should so much overrate the danger to be apprehended from that quarter, and almost overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, though formally and nominally of the Church of England, never enter her places of worship, neither have they communication with her ministers ! This deplorable state of things was partly produced by a decay of zeal among the rich and influential, and partly by a want of due expansive power in the constitution of the Establishment as regulated by law. Private benefactors, in their efforts to build and endow churches, have been frustrated, or too much impeded by legal obstacles : these, where they are unreasonable or unfitted for the times, ought to be removed ; and, keeping clear of intolerance and

injustice, means should be used to render the presence and powers of the church commensurate with the wants of a shifting and still increasing population.

This cannot be effected, unless the English Government vindicate the truth, that, as her church exists for the benefit of all (though not in equal degree), whether of her communion or not, all should be made to contribute to its support. If this ground be abandoned, cause will be given to fear that a moral wound may be inflicted upon the heart of the English people, for which a remedy cannot be speedily provided by the utmost efforts which the members of the Church will themselves be able to make.

But let the friends of the church be of good courage. Powers are at work, by which, under Divine Providence, she may be strengthened and the sphere of her usefulness extended ; not by alterations in her Liturgy, accommodated to this or that demand of finical taste, nor by cutting off this or that from her articles or Canons, to which the scrupulous or the overweening may object. Covert schism, and open nonconformity, would survive after alterations, however promising in the eyes of those whose subtilty had been exercised in making them. Latitudinarianism is the parheliou of liberty of conscience, and will ever successfully lay claim to a divided worship. Among Presbyterians, Socinians, Baptists, and Independents, there will always be found numbers who will tire of their several creeds, and some will come over to the Church. Conventicles may disappear, congregations in each denomination may fall into decay or be broken up, but the conquests which the National Church ought chiefly to aim at, lie among the thousands and tens of thousands of the unhappy outcasts who grow up with no religion at all. The wants of these cannot but be feelingly remembered. Whatever may be the disposition of the new constituencies under the reformed parliament, and the course which the men of their choice may be inclined or compelled to follow, it may

be confidently hoped that individuals acting in their private capacities, will endeavour to make up for the deficiencies of the legislature. It is too much to expect that proprietors of large estates, where the inhabitants are without religious instruction, or where it is sparingly supplied, will deem it their duty to take part in this good work ; and that thriving manufacturers and merchants will, in their several neighbourhoods, be sensible of the like obligation, and act upon it with generous rivalry ?

Moreover, the force of public opinion is rapidly increasing, and some may bend to it, who are not so happy as to be swayed by a higher motive ; especially they who derive large incomes from lay impropriations, in tracts of country where ministers are few and meagrely provided for. A claim still stronger may be acknowledged by those who, round their superb habitations, or elsewhere, walk over vast estates which were lavished upon their ancestors by royal favouritism or purchased at insignificant prices after church-spoliation ; such proprietors, though not conscious-stricken (there is no call for that) may be prompted to make a return for which their tenantry and dependents will learn to bless their names. An impulse has been given ; an accession of means from these several sources, co-operating with a *well*-considered change in the distribution of some parts of the property at present possessed by the church, a change scrupulously founded upon due respect to law and justice, will, we trust, bring about so much of what her friends desire, that the rest may be calmly waited for, with thankfulness for what shall have been obtained.

Let it not be thought unbecoming in a layman, to have treated at length a subject with which the clergy are more intimately conversant. All may, without impropriety, speak of what deeply concerns all ; nor need an apology be offered for going over ground which has been trod before so ably and

so often: without pretending, however, to any thing of novelty, either in matter or manner, something may have been offered to view, which will save the writer from the imputation of having little to recommend his labour, but goodness of intention.

It was with reference to thoughts and feelings expressed in verse, that I entered upon the above notices, and with verse I will conclude. The passage is extracted from my MSS. written above thirty years ago: it turns upon the individual dignity which humbleness of social condition does not preclude, but frequently promotes. It has no direct bearing upon clubs for the discussion of public affairs, nor upon political or trade-unions; but if a single workman—who, being a member of one of those clubs, runs the risk of becoming an agitator, or who, being enrolled in a union, must be left without a will of his own, and therefore a slave—should read these lines, and be touched by them, I should indeed rejoice, and little would I care for losing credit as a poet with intemperate critics, who think differently from me upon political philosophy or public measures, if the sober-minded admit that, in general views, my affections have been moved, and my imagination exercised, under and *for* the guidance of reason.

‘Here might I pause, and bend in reverence  
To Nature, and the power of human minds;  
To men as they are men within themselves.  
How oft high service is performed within,  
When all the external man is rude in show;  
Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,  
But a mere mountain chapel that protects  
Its simple worshippers from sun and shower!  
Of these, said I, shall be my song; of these,  
If future years mature me for the task,  
Will I record the praises, making verse  
Deal boldly with substantial things—in truth  
And sanctity of passion, speak of these,  
That justice may be done, obeisance paid



Where it is due. Thus haply shall I teach,  
Inspire, through unadulterated ears  
Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope ; my theme  
No other than the very heart of man,  
As found among the best of those who live,  
Not unexalted by religious faith,  
Nor uninformed by books, good books, though few,  
In Nature's presence : thence may I select  
Sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight,  
And miserable love that is not pain  
To hear of, for the glory that redounds  
Therefrom to human kind, and what we are.  
Be mine to follow with no timid step  
Where knowledge leads me ; it shall be my pride  
That I have dared to tread this holy ground,  
Speaking no dream, but things oracular,  
Matter not lightly to be heard by those  
Who to the letter of the outward promise  
Do read the invisible soul ; by men adroit  
In speech, and for communion with the world  
Accomplished, minds whose faculties are then  
Most active when they are most eloquent,  
And elevated most when most admired.  
Men may be found of other mould than these ,  
Who are their own upholders, to themselves  
Encouragement and energy, and will ;  
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words  
As native passion dictates. Others, too,  
There are, among the walks of homely life,  
Still higher, men for contemplation framed ;  
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase ;  
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink  
Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse.  
Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,  
The thought, the image, and the silent joy :  
Words are but under-agents in their souls ;  
When they are grasping with their greatest strength  
They do not breathe among them ; this I speak  
In gratitude to God, who feeds our hearts  
For his own service, knoweth, loveth us,  
When we are unregarded by the world.













